

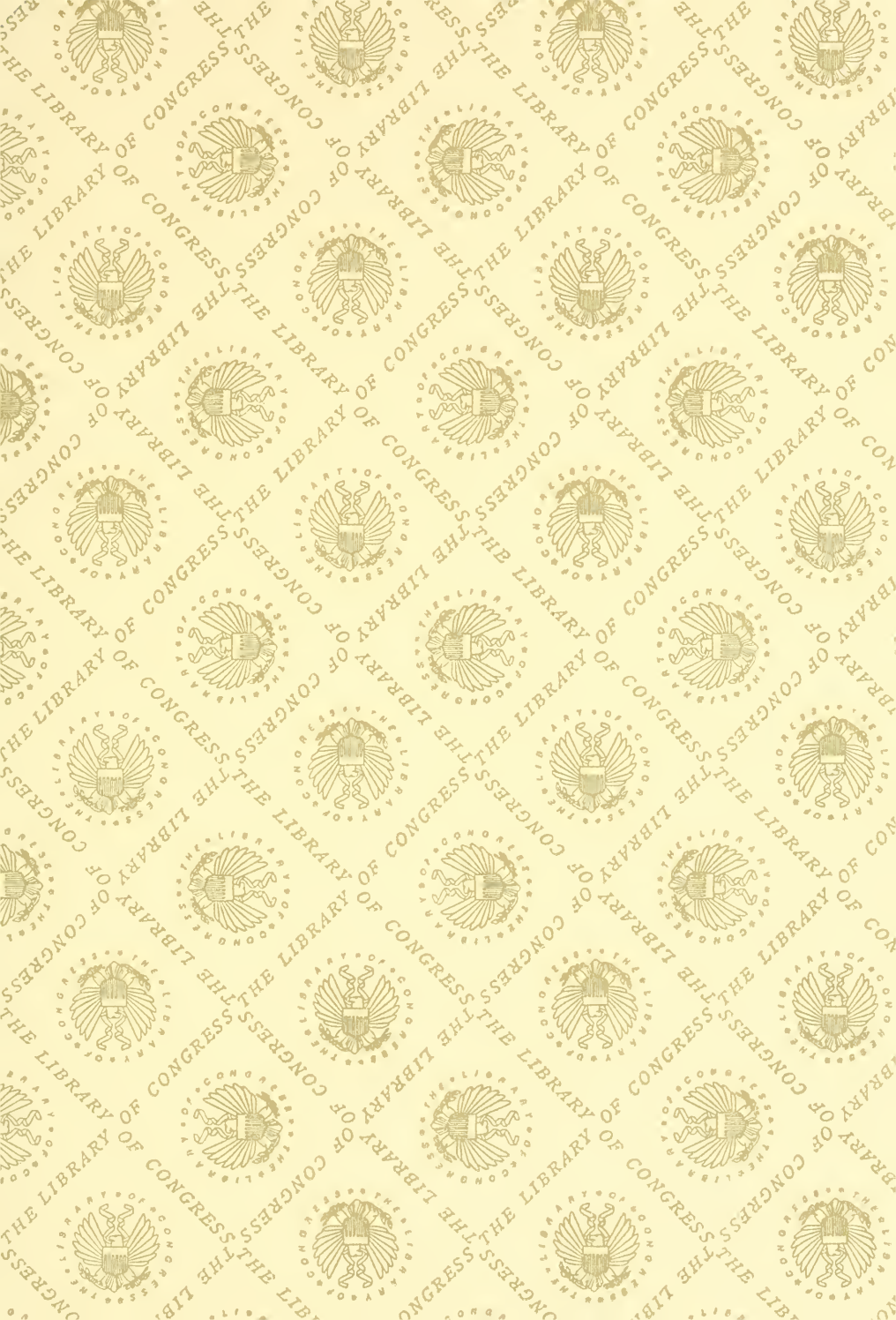
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James W. Thomas.

POEMS OF EGYPT *and* OTHER POEMS

By

JAMES W. THOMAS

EDITED BY J. ED THOMAS



DANVILLE, ILLINOIS
ILLINOIS PRINTING COMPANY
1916

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PREFACE

Many of my friends have requested me to publish my poems in book form. Heretofore I have never felt justified in doing so; but now I have consented that my son, J. Ed Thomas, edit them, and publish a number of the best ones, in this autograph edition of three hundred copies; and it is with pleasure that I dedicate the volume to my friend, Ezra Crane, who inspired me to start writing at the age of sixty.

JAMES W. THOMAS.

August 26, 1916.

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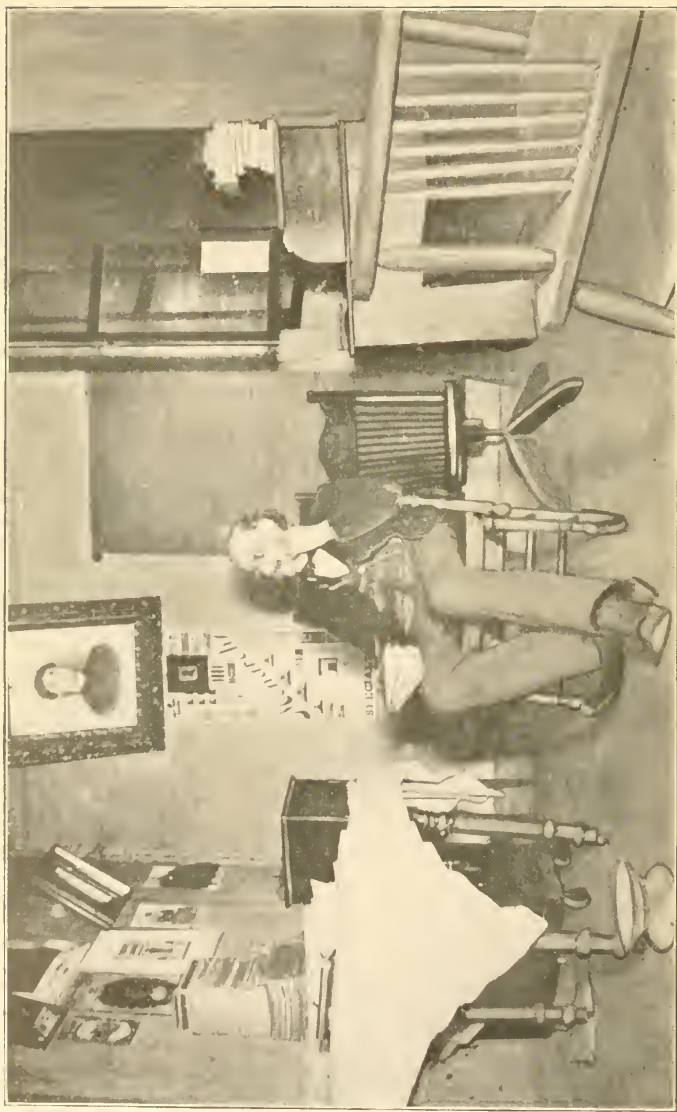
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The Poet in his den.

INTRODUCTORY BIOGRAPHY

BY J. ED THOMAS

AFTER sixty years of varied experiences to enrich his philosophy of life, the author of these poems began his literary career. It was more the result of an accident than any preconceived arrangement. Surrounded by reading friends, who enjoyed the discussion of literature in its technique and in its innate beauty; who would spend hours over the philosophy of the Rubaiyat or Thanatopsis, and equally appreciate the folk songs of Burns, was it strange that someone should suggest the writing of an original poem?

In the winter of 1896 and 1897, James W. Thomas wrote his first poem at the suggestion of Ezra Crane, the principal of the public schools in the little village of Makanda, in the hill country of Southern Illinois. They had formed what was called a reading circle, a crowd of literarily inclined old folk, patrons of the school and admirers of the teacher. Frank Hopkins had just concluded the reading of Thanatopsis, and the old boys were enjoying their pipes, when Ezra Crane proposed that the author compose, for the next meeting, a poem. All the members urged the matter on. As a result, "May In The Purple Hills" made its appearance, and was so well thought of by the other members of the club, that poems followed in quick succession, many of which were published in the local county papers.

James W. Thomas was born in Manchester, England, on January 23, 1838. Before he was of school age, he was taken by his father on a trip to South America, where he spent two years in Buenos Aires and Montevideo. They crossed the Atlantic in a sailing vessel, and were several months in passage. Their ship was wrecked just before making port. The author was thrown, by his father, from the sinking vessel to a seaman in the rescuing boat. In those Spanish speaking cities he used the Spanish language to the utter exclusion of English, so that, when he returned home, he could not talk with his mother, brothers and sisters. While in Montevideo he saw his uncle killed by the Spaniards, an incident that aroused bitter hatred of all things Spanish.

From the time of his return to England, until several years after the death of his father, he attended the English grammar schools, and enjoyed all the beauty of country lanes and ocean waves with the wild freedom of boyhood. The birds, the wind, and the sea filled his soul with the melody of poetry, which fifty years later found expression.

When he reached the age of fourteen years, he again crossed the Atlantic, this time with his widowed mother and other members of the family, to the United States, where he has ever since lived. They came by way of New Orleans and up the Mississippi to St. Louis. His youthful mind conceived odes and apostrophes to the ocean; lyrics for the seamen at their tasks in fair weather and foul; and melodies for the negroes in their happy, care-free, cabin life along the great river through the South.

The city was not the place for a healthy boy without a father's guidance, so his mother sent him to serve an apprenticeship on a farm in Wisconsin. There he learned in the university of hard work the pleasure of labor; and in a healthful, happy, vivacious surrounding of pioneer life he grew to manhood. The wild, unbroken prairie had its charms; the daughters of the settlers awoke the affections of a poetic heart; the rugged life of toil stimulated the philosophy of existence; and the author accumulated much material for the poems in this volume.

Wanderlust finally lured him back down the Mississippi. This time in a boat of his own. In the autumn of 1859, he built a houseboat on the banks of the Wisconsin, and, with a few select friends, traveled nearly the entire length of the Father of Waters. They drifted along, hunting and fishing, and tying up at the various cities and towns along the way. Some of the episodes of the trip are narrated by the author in his poem, "Wisconsin River."

When the drifters reached the mouth of the Red River of the South, the author learned that his brother-in-law ran a shipyard at Shreveport, Louisiana. He quickly sold his craft and went for a visit. The visit terminated in an occupation as clerk for his brother-in-law. While here he experienced to the full, high life in a southern river city, and broke many a spoke in the wheel of

chance. Yet the mocking-bird was a teacher of no mean standing; while the grind of river commerce showed many phases of human nature.

The disturbances that were soon to culminate in civil war, warned the author that it was time to travel north. Through chance or destiny he was stranded in Mound City, in Southern Illinois. Little did he think at that time that he would portray the beauty of Egypt in poetry. He was excited over the great question that had divided the nation, and being disqualified as a volunteer on account of having lost the sight of one of his eyes, he secured employment from the Union government delivering stock to confiscated farms in the south, along the Mississippi. And afterwards he was secretary and reporter for the Union League.

During the war he married Susan Ann Lumpkins, and settled down on a farm five miles from Cobden, in Union county. This was the center of the hill country, the watershed between the Ohio and Mississippi rivers. The natural scenery was equal to the Adirondacks in delicate shades and tints of color. He built his home on the top of one of these hills overlooking a valley on either side, and commanding a view of range after range of hills, both toward the Mississippi River and the Ohio. Here he surrounded himself with friends and flowers and toiled with nature every day for over thirty years, rearing a family of four children.

All of this was before he ever dreamed of writing the poems contained in this volume. None of the years were wasted, for everything was a preparation, a training for the work to follow, when the cup of life had reached its very full, and there was no empty glass to turn down on a vain philosophy, but a rich memory full of happy experiences, and a mind overflowing with admiration for nature and her true philosophy of existence.

AUGUST 26, 1916.



The poet's grotto.

POEMS OF EGYPT

MAY IN THE PURPLE HILLS

WE hail thee, O beautiful spring, with thy sunshine,
Thy showers, and flowers, and birds singing gay;
The meadows are green and the orchards are blooming,
All nature is crowning the sweet month of May.

The waters are sparkling, rippling and dancing
In the brook near by as laughing it sings;
Its music is mingling with the perfume of roses
As abounding with animate nature it springs.

The landscape's enchanting, inviting, awaiting
The young and the old to partake of the feast;
Away, then, we'll climb to the top of the mountain,
And bathe in the warmth of the sun from the East.

Hear the shrill call of the swift gliding engine
As it sweeps 'round the curve with its ribbon of smoke;
Now it bounds away in the distance like magic.
And is hid from our view in the elms and the oak.

Our pulses will glow with a vivacious gladness
Of health giving solace so sweet to enjoy,
As we gaze on the stretch of the far distant ranges,
Enchantment like this does God's bounty supply.

We hail thee, O beautiful spring, with thy sunshine,
Thy showers, and flowers, and birds singing gay;
The meadows are green and the orchards are blooming,
All nature is crowning the sweet month of May.

SPRINGTIME IN EGYPT

SILVERY note on rippling wave,
Slender nodding lilies lave,
Murmur low, thou gentle slave,
Dancing, laughing, roguish knave.

Through the meadows on thy way,
Past the orchard blooming gay,
On the banks sweet fairies play,
Bluebells chime a merry lay.

Sunbeams flitting in the grove,
Lazy humming bees now rove,
Birds match-making, cooing dove,
Nature, harmony, and love.

Spicy breath from off the hills
Gladdening the complaining rills,
Musically waving trills,
Tripping airily quadrilles.

Why not we the measure greet,
Graceful, rhythmic movement sweet,
Dewy bending of the wheat
In Aurora's purpling heat.

Matchless imagery will throng,
Golden-tinted waving song,
Sound the chorus, zephyr gong,
Softly, I the flowers among.

Pure sweet faces—see them smile,
Fragrance breathing all the while,
By on wavelets bubbles file
Down the mirrored sunlit aisle.

Journey on, thou gladsome sprite,
Bursting with a bright delight,
A moment seen, then hid from sight,
Witching fairy, liquid mite.



"May in the purple hills,"—Page 11.

Can it be we'll meet again,
Blossoms, birds and beauty vain?
Essence sweet, immortal reign,
Where, O where, the loud acclaim.

Whispering softly, this you know,
From whence you came, soon you'll go,
Earth and earthly things below:
Love's sweet virtues live and grow.

SNOW STORM, April 3, 1899

Shades of evening gathering fast,
Feathery snow rides on the blast,
April flowers are hidden deep;
Easter blossoms do not weep.

Mantle white, where green should be,
Ghostly robed the forest tree;
Sepulchral whispers are afloat,
Hushed the bluebird's silvery note.

Spring is dressed in hoary white;
Bloom and verdure hid from sight;
Shrieking loud, the cruel blast,
Baleful Boreas hurries past.

Would you harm our lady fair,
With the emeralds in her hair,
Rob her of her beauty bright,
With your icy garment white?

Surely you're not come to stay;
Surly god, away, away!
Cold and blusteringly he glowers,
Blowing fluffy snow in showers.

Though you're pretty, you're not wise,
Under your white vesture lies
A hard heart of cold deceit,
Though you're dressed so gay and neat.

Fickle beauty, you must go,
Watch the tears in rivulets flow,
Lay aside your robe of white,
Stealthily come to earth last night.

You but washed sweet April's face,
Soon she'll dress in emerald lace;
Soon the happy days will come,
Smiling sweetly in the sun.

And the birds and flowers return,
Songs, and blossoms by the burn;
Yes, April with its genial showers,
Crowns the head of May with flowers.

'MID THE HILLS AND VALLEYS AND GORGES
OF EGYPT

'MID the hills and valleys and gorges of Egypt,
The tints of the rainbow emblazoned are seen,
In the depth of its caverns stalactites hang pendant,
Its forests crown all with their shadows and sheen;
In the heart of the mountain we rambled together,
And crossed their dark chasms with torch burning bright,
Or we camped at their feet, by the spring in the grotto,
And sang with the echoes for chorus at night.

Still the verdure's as bright, and the old hills as lofty,
The moss on the sides of the cliff green as then,
The dear names that we cut on its face, are grown over,
Our loved ones have vanished—all silent the glen;
Yet my pulses beat high with a thrilling emotion,
As lonely I wander 'mid haunts where we strayed
In the old time together, when all life was rosy,
Filled full to repletion, their presence had made.



"We camped at their feet, by the spring in the grotto."—Page 14.

So I glide on and dream of this glorified splendor,
Renew loves and friendships surpassingly sweet,
Till I pass through the portals of time to that haven,
Where those who have vanished have found safe retreat;
Oh! adieu then, fair Egypt, thy fruits and thy flowers,
Enchanting the landscape by night or by day!
Let me live in this dreamland of beauty and fragrance
Till time wings the message, "Thy Spirit Away."

STONE FORT VALLEY

THROUGH a cliff-girt little valley,
There flows a quiet stream;
Its hillsides steep are fringed with trees,
Through which the soft lights beam;
Its gorges, guttered by the rain,
Are steep and deep and cool;
Adown the rippling waters run
Into a dreamy pool.

Bright flowers upon its hillsides grow,
And green sward, pretty sight;
Its sunset view is gorgeous
And picturesque its night;
In moonlight shadows phantoms stand,
Brought out in bold relief
Against the towering rocky side,
The mossy covered reef.

The spreading oaks with limbs outstretched
Are nodding to the moon;
The low night winds are murmuring
A mellow, soothing tune.
From out some lone recess we hear
The hoot-owl's mournful call,
It's mingling with the echo
Of the babbling waterfall.

Could nature's God have placed on earth
A more enchanting scene,
Than here among these purple hills,
'Mid foliage serene?
Our senses soothed with peacefulness,
Thus let the ages roll—
Imagination's camera,
Its image of the soul.

MONTA ROSA

HOW I love this dear home in the rugged Ozarks,
With its mountains of forests, those stately old parks,
And its tumbling cascades as they murmur along,
When they rush in the valley and join in the song
Of the waters that meeting the tides as they go
To that beautiful river, the bright Ohio.

Let us climb to the top of the mountain and gaze
Across to Missouri, where the sun's golden haze
Hangs a bordering curtain along its bold shore,
A gorgeous landscape from our own cottage door;
Among orchards and roses our coy cot it stands,
While the breeze of the morning wafts cool o'er the lands.

'Mid beauty and fragrance we live in delight,
And welcome with pleasure the clear, starry night,
With the chirp of the cricket and whip-poor-will's call,
While the bright, sparkling dew sheds a luster on all.
What a wonderful beauty attends the moon's flight,
With the many winged meteors glow in the night.

Dear memories, live on, tho' our friends pass away,
And their places are filled with the young and the gay;
Enchantment still hallows those scenes we love best
In the shadowy outlines of dear ones at rest.
Yes, I love this dear home in the rugged Ozarks,
With its orchards, green meadows and stately old parks.

IN AUTUMN 'MONG THE GOLDEN LEAVES

IN autumn 'mong the golden leaves,
And apples blushing in the sun,
The corn in shock, while pumpkins weave
Their vines as o'er the ground they run,
The farmers' teams go toiling on;
O'er fallow fields the wheat they drill;
They plod along till day is gone
And twilight deepening, damp and chill.

How cheerily the farmer boy
From labor home doth take his way;
His honest toil knows no alloy,
He sings aloud his roundelay.
Can pomp, or genius, know the wealth
Of strength, and spirit to enjoy,
With all the bliss of sleep and health,
Sweet pleasures which can never cloy?

In rural life he knows no care
Of stocks in speculation lost;
He cares not who this wealth may share,
Or how their restless heads are tossed.
At eventide he dons his best,
And o'er the hills doth trudge away;
He knows a cozy little nest,
Where dwells a maiden sweet and gay.

Yet Gordon's shy when he comes near
His highland girl, he knows not why;
With other girls he knows no fear,
To this one he can scarce reply.
Her mother meets him at the door
And welcomes him as mothers do,
An old friend's son from o'er the moor;
Her watchful eye tells her he's true.

Her father calls him by his name;
He knows that he is welcome here;
His face is now a burning flame,
The spell is broke, he loves her dear.
In warbling staves at mating time,
The thrush enchants us with his song,
A brilliant flash of light in rhyme,
Sweet singer of the silver tongue.

So Mary welcomes Gordon dear,
And marks the love-light in his eye;
He loses now his doubting fear;
She tells her love in blush and sigh.
Can this be Gordon, now so gay,
With his fair girl so sweet and coy?
The same old pranks will Cupid play,
Then crown with peace the farmer boy.

AUTUMN IN EGYPT

A FLUTTER in the maple,
A shower of golden leaves;
The lawn is all a-dapple
By the gentle autumn breeze.

Now listlessly they're falling
In golden mellow light,
While children's voices calling
To the leaflets in their flight.

We gaze in silent wonder
At the mottled, tumbling throng,
While feelings grow the fonder
To this whispering forest song.

Above are calmly floating,
In circles narrowing,
The buzzard, high rotating,
Their shadows following.



"In the heart of the mountain we rambled together,"—Page 14.

The dappled sky bends o'er us,
And cawing rooks pass on;
A landscape's all before us
Tinted by the setting sun.

And streamers from the westward
Signal departing day
To station out the night guard
In dun-colored livery.

The goldenrods were nodding
In the waning yellow sheen,
As night came down foreboding
On this lovely autumn scene.

AN AUTUMN SNOW STORM IN EGYPT

THE air is full of falling leaves,
The wind with shuddering murmur grieves,
The misty rain with spiteful throbs
Goes swashing past with mournful sobs,
And screams at times as 'twere in pain,
A noisy portent that the rain
Will turn to sleet with wintry blast
And cover all the landscape fast
With sleet and snow, an icy fling,
Upon the trees, like sleigh bells ring.
A mantle white relieves the gloom
And darkness flits out from the room;
Instead of leaves, now falling flakes,
And all that's in your soul awakes
To feast upon the wintry range.
How nature's artist wrought the change.

A WINTER SCENE IN EGYPT

ON every twig is glistening—
A brilliant, dazzling sight;
A keen north wind is whistling
To dunes of snow tonight.

In silvery robes the queen is clad,
Her smiling face we see;
Dreamily dance the shadows sad—
Fantastic in the glee.

The snow lies deep down in the gorge,
Heaped up its rocky sides;
The icy demon, shrieking surge,
In snowy drapery rides.

Shadowy forms quick ringing glide,
While darting here and there
On little painted hand-sleds ride
A joyous, fleeting pair.

Clear tinkling of the crystal bells
On all the branches 'round—
From glassy streams down in the dells
The skaters' merry sound.

Blithely all nature joins the night
To welkin hills resound;
Thousands of magic lanterns bright
In the blue dome abound.

Now swelling clear out on the breeze,
Harmoniously they sing;
Ice bells and timbrels from the trees
Their sweet vibrations fling.

Still louder rolls the joyful strain,
The skaters join the choir;
On moon-beams bright, mingling refrain,
Echoes are wafted higher;

And piercing through the freezing breath
Of purifying air,
Blend in the sky where there's no death,
Become immortal there.

All that is pure will ever live,
It ever was decreed;
To form or sound the thought we give
A working wonder, speed.

And to the bard a welcome give,
Who hope and gladness bring;
Treasures of thought will ever live,
When mounted on the wing.

THE FLOOD OF 1897

HERE at Cairo the two great rivers blend;
She sits in her cavern gloomily
Watching her dreaded fate with contumely;
Should the menacing waters with force send
Their mad swelling tide over her ramparts,
The fair city of the delta would face
Her destiny, yet, it is not to be;
She is anchored fast in a mighty sea,
Defying the Ohio and Mississippi.

Spray is continually washing her face,
Yet, with all this surging, her feet are dry—
Not a dastard to lament or to cry;
The anchor of hope is fast in its place
In the hearts of her gallant heroes
Who are watching the stealthy waters chase
Past their homes, like Holland, low-lying,
Around and above them mad waves flying,
“Gulf, to the gulf!” the rivers are sighing.

Hamlets in ruins, and billows chase,
Bubbling, eddying and whirling past
Where once the busy marts of commerce fast
Loaded and discharged package and case—
All is changed; and a dread brooding horror
Of dire calamity, in the mad race—
By the mightiest deluge since the flood—
Is breaking the barriers that all else withstood,
The boasted genius of our brain and blood.

Those peaceful scenes where nature lavishly
Made fertile lands to blossom as the rose—
Homes of plenty, luxury and repose;
At one fell swoop surges a turbid sea,
Engulfing all in its capacious maw,
Or with agonizing terror forced to flee
The hallowed spot where all they loved did dwell;
Now, the sound of breakers, as a funeral knell,
Turns a paradise into a liquid hell.

Is this all? No. The homes of the poor—
Scattered here and there in seclusion rude—
Who delve, fish and hunt in search of food,
Ranging the woodland and the soggy moor
Unmindful, or too indolent to think,
Wrapped in sweet repose, feel, alas! secure,
While the treacherous waters, in their might,
Steal around their cabins; and with afright
Awake, doomed. Oh! The terror of the night.

FAST MAIL

IN the stilly hours of the night,
The flying monster howls with fright,
As clouds of fiery sparks it hurls,
While on its shrieking way it whirls.
A light is streaming far ahead.
With vicious energy 'tis sped;
With seeming recklessness it flies,
Strong, heaving, panting, throbbing sighs.
Now shooting through a tunnel fast.
What shuddering tones, pulsating blast!
Around the curves 'tis speeding on,
Look! It seems a thing of life. 'Tis gone.
Hurling thro' space its human freight,
With heart of fire, it spurns the weight,
And scoffs with jeering, angry throbs
From its huge throat in bursting sobs.
Close by the throttle stands a man,
Steady of nerve, that knows he can
Subdue the monster at his will,
By one quick move; brakes on, 'tis still.
How much in life depends on you?
Your skill, your honor, life-work true,
Of men a leader you would be,
Control yourself; be free, be free.

THE OLD HOME

HOW often have I listened to the patter of the rain,
In the dark and quiet hours of the night,
How musical it sounded and what pleasure with it came,
In that dear old home of comfort and delight.
Such blessings in that good old home, were I back there again,
With the kind old folks, how happy would I be,
I have wandered o'er the ocean, the mountain and the plain,
Yet in fondest dreams the dear old home I see.

A circle 'round the big fireplace, we boys and girls would make,
How we'd frolic, romp and play the livelong night;
Together all the good old songs in harmony we'd wake,
And the merry chorus mingle in their flight.

I can ne'er forget that good old home, though far away I roam,
And those smiling, happy friends I love so dear,
The mem'ry of those loved ones lingers 'round my boyhood home,
In many a prayer I mingle oft' a tear.

There's my father and my mother I never can forget,
How at parting they to me their blessings gave,
All my brothers and my sisters live near the old folks yet,
And the faithful one is slumbering in the grave.

Though far away I wander, yet I will return again,
A dear sweet girl is waiting there for me,
There's nothing in this wide, wide world, on mountain, plain or
glen,
Like a welcome from my own sweet Bessie Lee.

MAID OF THE MOUNTAIN

THE maid of the mountain is fresh as the dew drop,
Her breath is as sweet as the lilac in bloom;
Her form, it is perfect; O, how I adore her;
Her face is as bright as the clear sunny noon.
Such fun-loving glances, when her blue eyes sparkle,
While nut brown her hair in silk ringlets doth wave;
How pleasant she greets you wherever you meet her;
Could angels do better? Not this side the grave.
O, how I do love this sweet maid of the mountain!
The wealth of the Indies I'd give to possess
A smile from that dear one, much more to caress her;
Such rapturous heartaches, bewitching the bliss.
Would life be worth living without ever loving
These ideal beauties wherever they be?
Take woman from earth, 'twould be joyless and barren,
Adrift without compass on a boundless sea.

A LOVER'S PARADISE

THE purple hills of Egypt,
Aglow with apple bloom;
Across the landscape fleeting,
The sunlight and the gloom.

The peaches and the cherries
Have pushed aside their veil,
And spread their fragrant petals
Down in the sunny dale.

The fields of wheat and clover
Are getting green again;
The tasseled willow catkins
Are waving by the fen.

The dogwoods on the hillside,
The brilliant redbuds, too,
While tulips gay, and lilacs,
Their showy flowers renew.

Do fairies live in bluebells,
And cupid in the heart?
Do love and fancy mingle
In bonds that never part?

The holiest emotions
Of sentiment and love,
Come with the breath of flowers,
And cooing of the dove.

Ah! Lovers walk in roses,
Forgetful of the past,
Emotional their heaven,
Sweet bliss that cannot last.

Until they reach the Eden,
The end of Hope's desire;
So evanescent ever,
The sound of Cupid's lyre.

COURTING IN EGYPT

THE purple hills of Egypt,
The sunny hills of Egypt,
The fruit belt hills of Egypt,
Of Southern Illinois.

These hills I love the dearest;
Those friends I loved sincerest;
'Mong them had larks, the queerest
Mad pranks in Illinois.

I met my love at "meeting,"
She gave me kindly greeting,
And close beside her seating,
At church in Illinois.

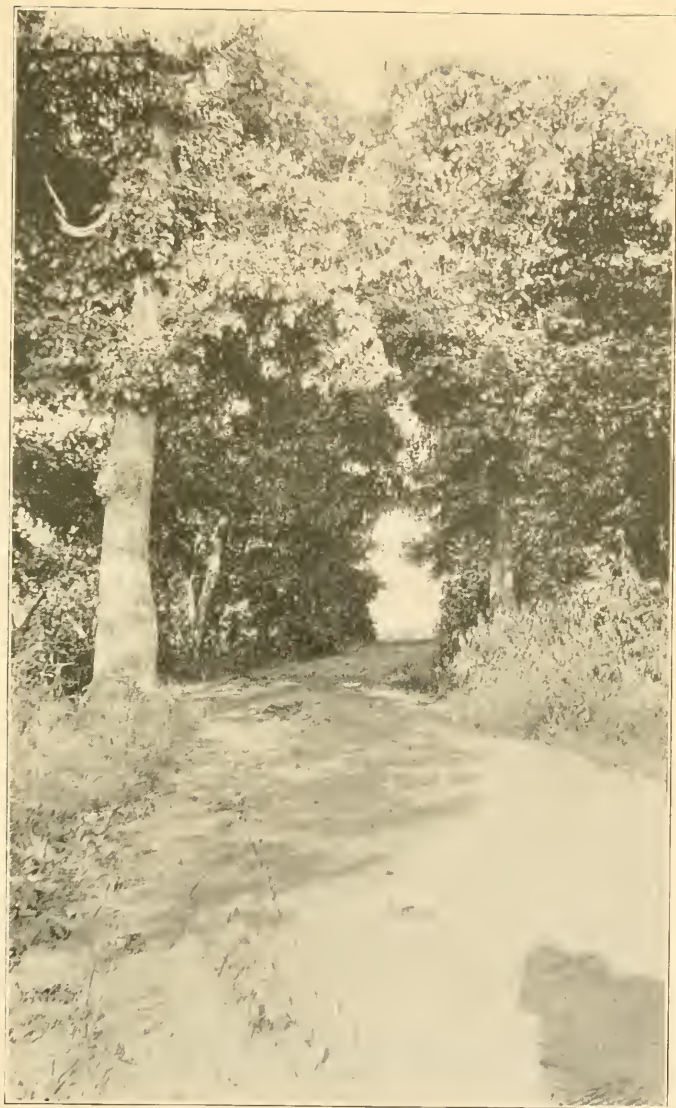
And when for home we started,
She took my arm warm-hearted;
At the short hour we parted,
Courting in Illinois.

Her cherry lips beguiling,
Her sparkling blue eyes smiling,
I kissed my pretty darling
Good night in Illinois.

Then vaulting to my saddle,
With loving words to bridle
This haughty handsome rebel,
My queen in Illinois.

My visit oft repeating,
Fresh charms each winsome greeting,
The blissful hours went fleeting
On wings in Illinois.

This song should live in story,
With lovers young and hoary,
For courting is the glory
Of Southern Illinois.



The entrance to Stone Fort Valley.—Page 15.

COMPLIMENTS TO A FRIEND

A SPRIGHTLY, black-eyed, sweet-faced girl,
I know her passing well;
Her eyes like liquid diamonds shine,
When a story she doth tell;
And the most impressive nodding,
'Twould make you laugh to see
Her snap and roll her eyes about,
It always does with me.
She lives in a little village,
Below the rugged cliffs
Of the Ozark purple mountains,
Where the lazy Drury sifts
Thru the overhanging willows
And the blooming flowers and grass,
Where the noisy boys leaped in the stream,
Oft I watched them as I passed
This dingley dell, all tumbled up,
Where not a level spot
Is found in all this jumbled place,
To build a house or cot.
Yet down within that cozy dell
Are kind friends, tried and true;
Around the heart dear memories cling,
For constant friends are few.

LASSIE OF THE PURPLE HILLS

BEAMING o'er with smiles she trips
Lightly o'er the lea;
Coral red are her sweet lips,
Rosy cheeks I see.

Sparkling eyes and dimpled chin,
Eyes of violet blue;
Sunbeams now her kisses win
With their lovelight true.

Briskly o'er the meadow gay,
Dainty, pretty maid,
Dazzling in light, then away,
Flutt'ringly, afraid.

Winsome lassie, oh, how shy,
Graceful as the fawn;
Tresses waving airily
In the wooing morn.

Sweet as bluebells swinging near,
Happy as the lark;
Liquid harmony we hear
Flowing through the park.

Lightly tossed about her head
Golden ringlets stray;
Fleet and firm, yet light, her tread,
O'er the hills away.

A FOX CHASE IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

I WISH I were a boy again;
Such friends I'll ne'er see more;
How happy at the old home then
In those blest days of yore;
All day we'd work about the farm,
At night we'd hunt the coon,
And wind the horn, with its alarm
Our dogs would echoes tune.

'Twas music when the hounds would run,
The red fox bounding on,
With joyous shouts and full of fun,
We'd follow one by one.
Now, far away the sounds came back;
How eager then we'd chase,
Along the mountain side we'd track
Down to the mountain's base.

See, what splendor in the light,
Out in the valley wide;
The clear rays of the moon, how bright,
The dogs, how smooth they glide.
Ringing, echoing melody,
Along the plain they go,
Our pulses beating merrily
With joyous, healthful glow.

We're near the little running stream,
That mellow ring we hear—
Bubbling, gurgling, now a gleam
Of silvery light to cheer.
We'd quaff its pure, sweet water bright;
'Twas nectar to us boys:
How happy then; our hearts were light,
And innocent our joys.

BOYS ARE BOYS

WE always will remember,
Our boyhood's happy days,
Patches that we visited
Where watermelons grew;
The places we went a-fishing,
And the jolly times we had;
No boy on earth can equal
A healthy country lad.

Knew each orchard by its name,
Could find them in the dark,
We seemed to go by instinct,
We were always there on time,
How we would get together for
A forage, none can tell;
Our stomachs and our pockets
With choicest fruit would swell.

We'd sometimes build a camp fire,
Then something we would roast;
Yes, roasting ears, and anything
We caught, would be our prey;
Tell long yarns and sing our songs
With noisy, boyish fun;
Often hunt the coon or fox
Till the rising of the sun.

Winter time when snow was deep,
The rabbits had no chance,
Never let one get away
Unless they dodged the shot;
Twist them out of hollow trees,
Or shoot them on the run,
Such a hungry lot of boys,
With game and dogs and gun.

Some say they never did such things;
I can't see how they lived,
It was not down in Egypt,
Where each boy owned a dog.
When we'd hear them blow the horn
Or dog's sweet music ring,
Out we'd go a-hollowing,
And follow on the spring.

Placed ourselves about in squads,
And watched to get a shot,
Each boy's dog invariably
Was leader of the pack.
When he'd hear his favorite,
O, how that boy would yell;
Over hills, through gorges deep,
Loud echoes in the dell.



Stone Fort.—Page 15.

Boys today are just the same,
They never can be still,
A boy's a boy where'er he be,
No matter where he lives;
And unless they are very tired,
Or fast asleep in bed;
Boys will always make a noise,
Unless asleep or dead.

OLD DAYS IN EGYPT

I HAVE wandered from the homestead,
The old folks and the boys,
And the sunny hills of Egypt,
Of Southern Illinois.
And the pretty girls we used to court
A-coming from the church
In the days of long ago
When the Deacon used to preach.
When Perry was a jolly boy,
We all worked on the farm
A-picking fruit and shipping it
On sultry days and calm;
Or whooping went to singing school,
Where Mrs. Munn was marm,
We'd pass the Colonel's hewed log house,
Or stop in for a warm,
And eat his luscious red winesaps,
While Theo. was popping corn.
Then we'd call the dogs by tooting
His old conch shell and horn.
Then Jap and Al and Jim and George
Would meet down at the still,
And guzzle down Lit's peach brandy,
They soon all got their fill.
Sometimes 'twas rather heavy to tote it off that
way,

So they'd coil down in a cozy place
And sleep till break of day.
A merry dance we often had at Eph's brick on the
hill,
With charming girls from towns around,
I cannot name; nor will
Their memory fade from out my mind
Till my heart grows cold and still.
Yes, Charlie played the fiddle
And called the dance so well;
"Swing your partners, right and left,"
We'd hoe it down pell mell;
For this was Egypt's glory in those days we loved,
so dear,
To waltz and schottisch round the room, and quaff
Egyptian cheer.
We roamed the hills, we knew no bounds,
We never thought of fear.
I can taste that peach and honey, in my dreams
and fancy yet.
I'd give a little fortune, and give it free, you bet,
To meet those dear old cronies, such friends we
ne'er forget;
What's left of us are getting old, the rest have
passed away;
Our families have scattered, but few have gone
astray;
Some are near the old home yet, while some are
far away.
I often think of chum F. H., and the yarns he used
to tell;
Then Lou, John, Jim, and Granger would make it
hot as hell,
But the Madam, she would cool us down, at that
cozy good hotel.
We soon shall all be gone, for others to make room,
Upon this happy, gay old world, as we sail off to
the moon.



"Through a cliff-girt little valley, there flows a quiet stream."—Page 15.

It may be there or somewhere else, no one of us
can tell;
We know it must be heaven, for we're not afraid
of hell.
We lived our lives, we did our best,—not always,
but we tried;
I know we'll get some spirit to act for us as guide,
To take us where our friends have gone, that
happy world beyond,
Or lie and wait for judgment day, till Gabriel
blows his horn;
Now you old chaps a-living yet, don't think this
overdrawn,
I told the truth, you know I did, as sure as you
are born.

THE MISER

THERE'S a little old miser lives up on the hill,
Who lives to make money, without conscience, but will
Buy of a neighbor, if the neighbor be poor
And must sell at some price to keep the wolf from the door.
There's nothing of scandal goes 'round but he knows;
Little matter to him, should they be friends or be foes,
He will pry out their secrets—no secrets has he—
When confidence gained, this miser happy will be.
For service with money, he will charge ten per cent,
Or should one get behind with a note or with rent,
He will call for a summons, and sell them out quick;
Not caring who suffers, the defenseless or sick.
He will sell you his land, and will make you a deed,
Then a mortgage will take. In the time of your need
You will pay him the interest, or out you will go.
It's useless to reason with this miser, you know.

He will borrow of all, but seldom he lends,
Beats all he can, not excusing his friends.
He's very forgetful of any good turn;
And, much rather than give his old duds, will them burn.
He is jealous of others that are getting on well,
And pries into their business to see what they sell;
And should others not do what he wants them to do,
He will threaten and tell them, "Sir, you I will sue."
This little old miser has a falsetto squeak,
And always is anxious about others to speak;
How he will flatter you, in his manner to tell;
Should you cross him the least, he will wish you to hell.
He is quick and alert, remorseless or gay,
If he owes you, he'll owe you as long as he may;
But should you owe him, then a note you must give.
He will tell you he is anxious to live and let live.
What a jolly old miser, when nothing it costs;
He cares not who pays it, if to him it's no loss.
Yes, he'd sponge on a widow; but owe him a cent,
Why he'd hound you, harrass you; don't think he'd relent.
Watch him deal with a poor devil, and make him believe,
"I do this, my dear sir, your distress to relieve,"
While around you he's weaving his web and his snare!
Be careful, be careful! Look out! Be aware!
No religion has he, yet religion he tried;
Says it cost him too much, so out he did slide;
The business he went into did not suit the church;
After discussing the matter, threw him out with a lurch.
He's a hardened old sinner. Yes, death will be glad,
The warrant to serve on this hoary old lad;
How he'll squirm and wiggle to cheat, if he can;
All the moments he's counting, of nature's short span;
This soulless old miser will give up the ghost,
And the devil will steer him to hell for a roast.
He'll be welcome among them as welcome could be;
How the imps, they will caper, the miser to see.
Old Nick, he will watch him, for he knows well his man,
For this miser would beat him, or usurp his plan.

He is sly, and will find the best place in the den;
Accomplished in trickery is this master of men.
Now he's safe in that home that so long he has sought,
Among his affinities damned; he knows how he brought
Himself to perdition to be punished and slammed,
To herd, in eternity, his small soul with the damned.

MAKANDA IN JUNE

(A prose poem)

QUIET, dreamy, respectful Makanda, sleepy hollow of the purple hills, nestled among high rocks and dense foliage, of all shades from pale to dark green, rustling and swaying in aromatic breezes of elder blossoms, clover and honeysuckle. Dingle of quaintness and picturesque boldness blended with the beauty of forest and hill. The long, graceful sweep of roads climbing abrupt slopes to the top are lost in the wood or the blue ether of the sky. This is the glorious first month of summer—June—captivating, intoxicating, loving, and loveliest maiden and youngest matron of the year. All nature is in harmony with thy loveliness, pregnant with thy joyfulness, bubbling over with sunshine and mirth.

The houses on the hillsides seem to be playing hide-and-seek with one another; here a gable is peeping out; there the chimney top; now and then the side or end of a cottage peeps out of its bower; occasionally one, bolder than the rest, stands out alone watching his neighbors and spying upon their loveliness, but they are all in charming repose and quiet seclusion.

With evening's shades cool and refreshing, comes the rich, mellow, deep tones of the bell of the First Baptist Church. The notes reverberate as they descend into the valley, and mingle with the silvery chimes of the Methodist Episcopal Church bell. These bells that call the godly people to worship blend together in their harmony as all good things and people do. Their anthems of thankfulness to their God and giver of all that is good and pure, dies away, in trembling echoes among the hills.

The very trees toss up their heads in sympathy and love.

Nature, heaven and earth are God's, and we are his children,
designed to tread the waves of advancement through all eternity.
Let us emulate nature in its joy and usefulness:

Let us glide on and dream of this glorified splendor,
Renew loves and friendships surpassingly sweet,
Till we pass thro' the portals of time to that haven
Where those that have vanished have found safe retreat.

MAKANDA FLOODS

WAS you ever in Makanda,
When the water's on the rise?
When 'tis pourin' down with rain,
An' murky are the skies?
When the dam across the Drury
Has thrown all the waters back?
When the houses are all flooded,
An' the stream's across the track?
When the youngsters are a wadin'
In the water an' the mud,
An' the sidewalks are a floatin'
Like a reg'lar Johnstown flood?
When the people are a shoutin'
An' a laughin' when they see
Some tipsy cuss a tumblin'
Off the sidewalk in the sea?
Why then of course it's very nice
To be hung up in the dry,
A taking notes and laughin'
At your neighbors on the sly.
Well, after all is said an' done,
Makanda's clean an' sweet;
It drowns the rats an' cleans the pens,
An' levels down the streets,
Yes, the city dads an' marshal,
It gives them work to do,
An' throws the corporation



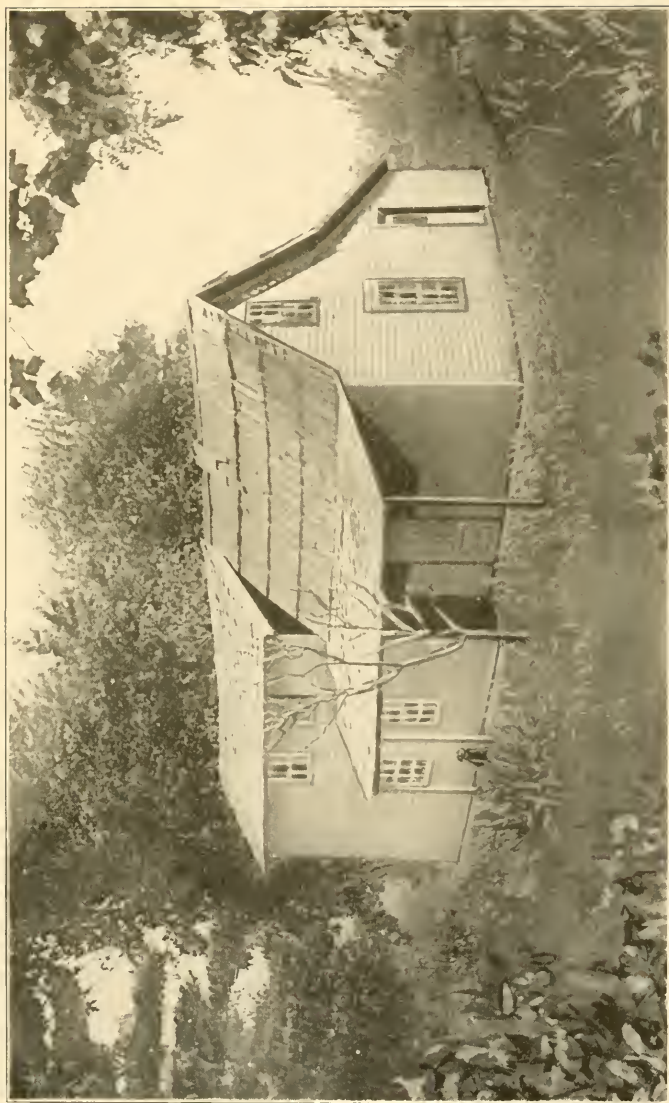
"Those stately old parks."—Page 16.

In a great commotion, too.
It makes us all industrious,
When afishin' out our goods;
The most enjoyable thing in life
Are these semi-annual floods.

THE MAKANDA KID

THE small boy's good to make a racket,
Wear out pants and tear his jacket;
To jump and shout and go a swimmin',
Sneak back home and get a skinnin'.
His appetite he never loses;
Digs in first and always chooses
The biggest piece of cake or chicken;
And at the table puts his lip in,
Unless his daddy stops his gabbin'
With strap or switch outside the cabin.
And thus he goes on thro' the summer,
As big a nuisance as a drummer.
He watches around and rides the train;
He's up to somethin', shine or rain;
You are never surely out of dread,
Unless he's fast asleep in bed,
Even then he's liable to take
A nightmare and the folks awake.
He's such a noisy little cuss;
Awake or asleep he's in a fuss.

POEMS OF NATURE



"Monta Rosa"—Egyptian home of the author.—Page 16.

STORM ON THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

MAJESTIC ocean, blue and vast,
Pulsating, heaving, living waste
Of waters surging fierce and fast,
Thy billows bursting in the blast;
In yeasty mountains carried high,
We know thy ominous fearful cry,
Surge after surge hurled to the sky,
Up where the raging demons fly;
Crash! The heavens terrific lend
Their help to inspire the water fiend,
While thunderbolts so vivid send
In pandemonium hellish blend;
Darkness has added to the strife,
To aid this ravisher of life.

VIOLETS

GENUS Viola,
To know thee is to love thee,
Thou multus flora.

The violets grow
Modestly hidden, yet sweet
The spring beauties blow.

Even strange flowers
We have never met before
Are dear friends of ours.

Perfume points the place
Among moss and grasses where
Dews her diamonds trace.

Dismal tho the plain,
Thou cheerest the lone traveler,
While summer holds claim.

A passing spirit,
Inhaled and seen by mortals,
All may inherit.

Dear, sweet violet,
Many years have I known thee,
Beautiful eyelet.

Times gone by with me,
I revert to happy scenes
Away beyond the sea.

Yes, in all nations,
Where on soil man's foot hath trod,
Are thy relations.

Council ever give,
Bright-faced children of the wild,
Teach us how to live.

You sweeten our lives,
Your soul grows in incense,
In purity thrives.

O thou wayward child,
Should they ever neglect thee,
Thou runnest wild.

Fairies of the dell,
In all thy moods we love thee,
We cannot say farewell.

A SUMMER SHOWER

A HALO floats o'er that soft breathing shadow,
As it sails o'er the landscape so quiet and cool;
Like the fanning of angel wings soothing our sorrow,
And shading the depths of the clear crystal pool.

It floats o'er the woodland, it climbs the steep mountains,
And crowns it with grandeur, this dark bluff wave,
But soon the blest treasure returns to the fountain,
Refreshing and sparkling in clear depths to lave.

But hark! from its throne comes a vibrating murmur,
It marshals its strength to return to the plain;
Now it leaps from its battlement, louder and firmer,
And scatters its missiles in soft summer rain.

It brightens the landscape; O, hear the birds twitter;
The flowers exhaling the sweetest perfume,
All nature bursts forth in its freedom from fetters,
The bright smile of sunlight dispels all the gloom.

SOLITUDE

THE solitude, the solitude.
I love old Nature's dismal mood;
Its sombre shades in leafy dells,
Its gaunt, grim, silent, craggy hills;
There watch the vivid lightning's scorn,
Its golden thread-like lace is strewn
On blackest velvet, while the loom,
Is rattling with a-boom, a-boom;
Then suddenly, when fury's spent
And canyon far below is rent,
There leaps a foaming, hissing mass,
Where monster, tumbling boulders pass,
A carnival in wildest glee,
Yet mingling in harmony.

SILVER-LEAF POPLAR

SMILING sunshine, welcome summer;
Zephyrs wandering through the dells;
Why not live a life of pleasure,
While the air with fragrance swells?

Waving, whispering, lightly tossing,
Foliage of the Aspen brood,
Wooing, sighing, bowing, crossing,
Restless sprites of willful mood.

You are dancing, dancing ever,
Though all nature's fast asleep,
Merry elves, alert and clever,
Bobbing 'round to get a peep.

Mounting high above your neighbor,
Crowding every branch and spray,
On the top you swing with leisure,
Cloud or sunshine, night or day.

Cool, refreshing, shadow-casting,
From springtime till summer's end,
Nothing of your freshness wasting,
As you nod and bow and bend.

Boldly leaning 'gainst the blue sky,
Miles around the landmark seen;
Hawks dart past you as they home fly,
To their eyrie, stately queen.

A SUMMER SKY

WHITE clouds of fluffy vapor rise,
A downy, billowy puff;
They sail along like cotton balls,
Or in the wind they luff.

They swell or lessen in the breeze,
Their gauzy fabric yields,
Lengthening out or doubling up,
The bright foam lightly yields.



"A winter scene in Egypt."—Page 20.

Now look like gulls in upper air
Serenely as they dip,
Now move along so placidly
As tho' a full-sailed ship.

These phantom fleets with spectre crews
Will circle 'round, and loom
O'er a heaven-suspended ocean blue
As boundless as is doom.

No reef, no wreck, no found'ring there,
Nor ages work a change,
They drift away and come anon,
Ethereally they range.

Should ocean's waters all dry up,
The sun be blotted out,
These mystic travelers of the air
Would stop or change their route.

COQUETTING FRAGRANCE

I HEAR and revel in the passing fragrance
Of the springtime zephyrs lisping sweet adieus.
They take our welcome on their cooling pinions,
Harmonious incense coquetting with the dew;
They laugh to sunlight's variegated songs;
Their souls now dance to rhythmic melody;
Not flowers nor grasses murmur lovers' wrongs,
They melt in one delicious symphony.

Ye amorous lovers of the air proclaim
To all that smile in wood or valley;
In budding spring no chastity profane,
Or with joys impassioned love-forms dally;
But leave with all a benediction rife
With soothing memories of the passing call,
In palpitating loveliness and life,
For nature's lovers bring delight to all.

BUDS ARE BURSTING

BUDS are bursting; birds are singing;
Fragrance wafting musically;
Floating radiance; balmy breezes;
Sunlight dancing merrily;
Lambkins bleating; crows a-cawing;
Tapping, listening, gay woodpeckers;
Cow bells tinkling; dreamy meadows;
Sleepy streamlets, lilies checker;
Droning, humming, buzzing, sighing,
Air and water, woods and insects;
Children happy; 'tis nature's gay day;
Hills and valleys joy reflecting;
Scudding white caps, rolling billows,
Shadows follow mellowingly,
Fanning, cheering, light and gladness,
Earth and heaven comminglingly,
Let us journey—yes, as pilgrims—
Through the holy sanctuary,
Whose canopy is arching heaven;
Resplendently, bliss forever,
Heat pulsating ethereally;
Ceaseless anthem, song perpetual;
Men and angels watch and wonder;
God's harmony, a joy celestial.

A CLOUD PICTURE

A FLUFFY cloud, like foaming milk and white.
To eastward rising as in bubbling haste;
Behind, swiftly played, the glimmering lightning,
While all the sky, around, above, was clear.
The night was warm, serene, and quiet,
When suddenly a boom as 'twere a battery,
Then all again was silent, no recurring peal—
So grandly beautiful this vapory mass.
Viciously this cloud lit up with hellish glare.



"The homes of the poor—Scattered here and there in seclusion rude,"—Page 22.

Now gone, now changed to quivering golden lace,
As if some fiery imps were playing hide and seek;
These fiery, roguish, impish knaves,
So vividly they flit from place to place,
Yet seem to keep well hid behind this screen.
Now rotating in a hideous heap infernal,
Of threatening black, with a roaring awful crash,
It rolled defiantly to mid heavens,
Then poured in windy torrents its pent-up wrath.
 Soon melting, disappearing, as 'twere magic.
Now all is cool and fragrant with an earthy odor,
While a crescent moon hangs low down in the west,
Its pale, thin light reflecting shadows dim.
See, all the starry heavens smile in happy unison,
As if listening to the music of the leaflets murmuring,
And the humming of a myriad happy insects,
That sprang at once to earth from nature's fruitful womb,
And all the beauties manifold are given
To delight and please the soul of man.

THE COMING STORM

FLAKES of mingled hues vividly pass
O'er the emerald sod or the horizon's rim,
Where light and shade blend with earth and ocean wild,
Making mimic rainbows, as through mists they skim;
While distant, wild, tumultuous noises mingle,
And the dreaded demons of the deep awake,
Calling, in our moments of regret, to come
And of their eternal energy partake.
Shriek on! ye maddened race by venom blasted,
While the landscape pales in your drear battle smoke
Of clouds of white foam, riding vale and mountain,
As castle, cot, and hovel squat to earth, ere the wild storm
 broke.

INDIAN SUMMER

THE dusky Indian summer, glorious autumn waif,
Makes the distant hills glow in a purple tint,
The broad landscape hazy with thy softened sheen,
While tumbling golden leaves in mellow sunlight glint.
And rich, ripe, yellow pumpkins, globes of joy,
With round smiling faces bright and bold,—
Anticipation of the luscious pie,—
Heaped high on farmers' wagons, now are hauled.
We hear the piping in the blue-grass vale,
A shrill whirr, the hunter's shot, a falling quail;
But let's pass on; none but the kindest know
There's room for all God's creatures, high or low.
Tell me why cruel man should wish to slay
His weaker brother in an unjust fray,
While the whispering air breathes but delight,
With ample space for every planet in its flight?
Yet man, the highest type of stunted worth,
Is noblest, supreme, he rules the earth.

THE DYING YEAR—1898

COLD, sad, and pale the old year looks;
He's merging in the night of death
With snowy hills and frozen brooks,
How frigid cold his heaving breath.
In fitful sobs it comes and goes;
He feels, he knows, he's near the close.

You're dying hard, my good old friend;
I cannot sleep while yet you live;
I'll watch beside you to the end,
And parting cheer and blessing give;
And cherished shall the memory be
Of all the joys you brought to me.

The nation has had cause to weep,
But now her stars in splendor shine
Beyond the waters broad and deep,
O'er islands of the fruit and vine.
"We love the right, we hate the wrong,"
Shall ever be our matchless song.

Then fare thee well, dear ninety-eight;
You soon will mingle on the shore
Where spirit years in silence wait,
And make the number one shade more
With all those whom you took from earth—
Its clouds and sunshine, grief and mirth.

How many loves were wrecked while you,
Unheeded, passed your day serene,
Or fiercely o'er the earth did strew
A dismal, dreary, desolate scene?
Some men will bless, and some will rue,
The time spent well or ill with you.

The old year groans with his last breath,
While o'er the earth there hangs a pall;
It is the winding sheet of death,
And brooding darkness covers all,
But to my mind there comes a gleam
Of years gone by as in a dream.

BOREAS vs. NEPTUNE

WHAT a throbbing, what a beating,
What a dashing, splashing rain,
What fierce gusts come mixed with sleeting,
Rattling on the window pane.

Hear old Boreas stamp and bellow
From his cave in mountains drear;
Wrathful, ruthless, blustering fellow,
Whining, swirling o'er the weir.

What a bounding to the steeple,
What a howling, rocking wild,
What a mocking of the people,
Loudly shrieking like a child.

With the gust the rain he's whirling;
Now he dashes at the crowd;
Hats and caps in madness hurling,
Crazed with vengeance blusters loud.

See! He's gathering all his forces,
Gamboling with his frantic imps;
Crowding all his dread resources,
Wildly jumping, on he limps.

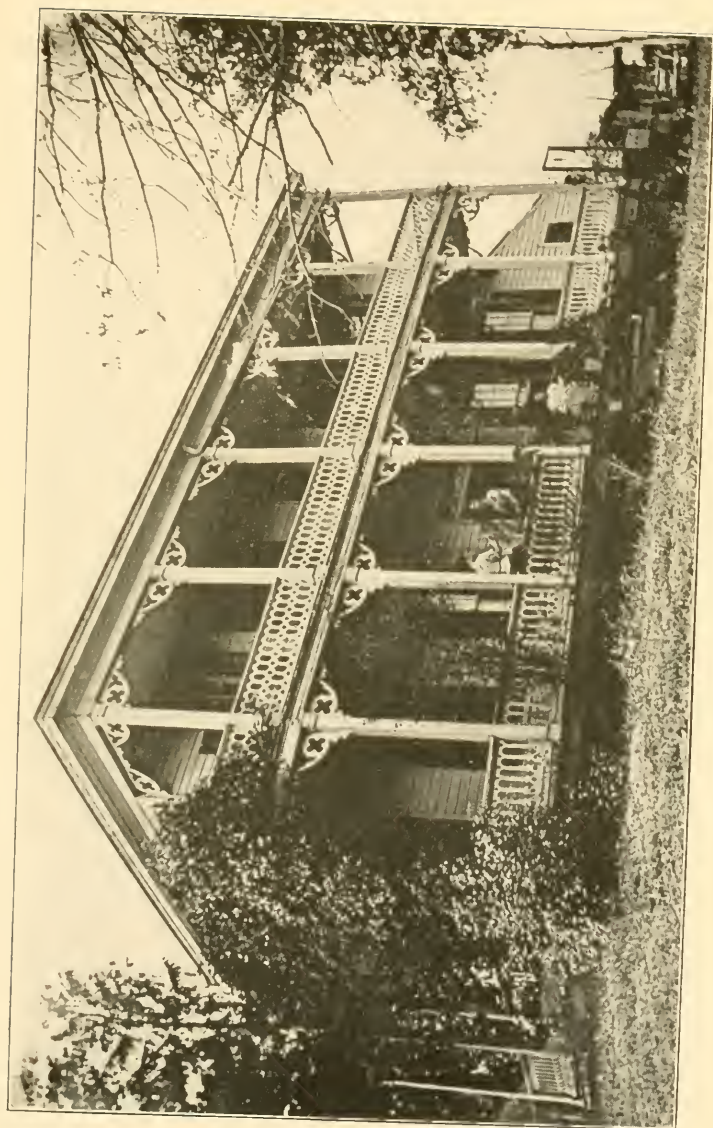
Crashing through the wildwood yonder,
Surging o'er the fierce lake wide,
Ships he wrecks, yet on he wanders
To the ocean's shambling tide.

Blow away, you cursed old villain!
Surges answer all your sneers;
Neptune seated on his pillion,
Trident poised, defies your jeers.

Now they meet in deadly combat,
Long and loud the battle dins;
Harsh resounds the burly fiat;
Hurled to chaos, Neptune wins.

BEATS HELL

HURLING frost foam, whirling snowdrifts,
The Ice-king rules supreme;
Starts a mighty phalanx southward,
Costumes white, hoar-locks serene;
Marching down the Mississippi
And Missouri, locks them fast;
Bids defiance to the south-land;
Lays in waste the verdure vast.



"Homes of plenty, luxury and repose."—Page 22.

In the North-land, with remorseless
Cruelty, he rules and sways;
Blood congeals as cold increases,
Hymning death in freezing lays.
With foamy lips, we hear him sing,
Crag and mountains honor him,
Boreas howling, answering
Hoarsely, joins the frantic hymn.

Icebergs rear their lofty summits
As they crowd the polar seas;
Glaciers crawling down their channels
With a slow and ponderous ease,
These are servants to this tyrant,
In his grip he holds them fast,
Ruler of a mighty empire,
Half the world within his grasp.

Pyramids to dead and dying
(The Egyptian dwarf in shame)
Scorns upon their tombs to mention,
Leaves them thus without a name.
Boundless seas of ice and snow range
Waste his regions of the poles;
Puny man, with best endeavors,
Is clasped fast within these folds.

Slow the earth may change its axis,
North or South to frigid seas,
Howe'er the earth it gravitates,
Cautiously he balances;
Powers of Hell combined, volcanic,
Sulphurous, raging, fiery mass,
In fury bursts, in rage ceases,
Swift escaping pent-up gas.

All the powers of earth united,
And the planets all allied,
Should against him hurl their forces,
Naught he cares, he's deified.

King, you call him? Yea, a god is.
Calm and cold his realm he sways,
Never troubled by invasions,
Unexplored, remains always.

A force in Nature undisputed,
On a throne immovable,
From the beginning, without end,
Fixture imperturbable.
All must bow to mandates cruel,
That are victims of this law,
Clamping mighty lakes and rivers,
Within his capacious jaw.

Iceland, Greenland's icy mountains,
'Mong his crags of ice and snows,
Lordly bold this god relentless,
Ages pass, no older grows;
Ancient gods are dwarfs beside him;
Beelzebub now hides with shame,
Grinning, fiery, hateful monster—
Hurl him back from whence he came.

Should this ice god step in Hades,
Out the fires of hell would go;
Prince and devils, all would scramble;
Hell itself would overflow
In the hissing, bubbling caldron,
Should the devils fail to fly,
Frozen stiff in their lost mansion,
Satan with the damned would die;
Or worse than fire would be the torture—
Icebergs once where heat and flames;
Eternally in polar regions,
Lost, forgotten, Ice-god reigns.

A CONFLAGRATION IN A STORM

'TIS the midnight hour tolling,
A cold monotone rolling
In the arteries of the wind,
Chasing off the dreaded fiend
That lives in the steeples high.
They are ghouls set free that fly,
Rumbling, tumbling, they bellow
The vibration of the sounds,
Till the bells have rung their rounds,
And the echoes chase them off,
With a dull and mocking scoff.
Dong, dong, dong, dong, dong, dong,
'Tis a medley of noises
Up high in the breezes,
Mingling with midnight their song.

Blackness and fury and storm,
Eyes flashing fire in their scorn,
Robed in the garments of hell,
Bound with a shrieking and yell,
While thunderbolts scorch the pall
Of doom, now hanging over all,
While fierce ice-balls are pounding;
Tempest is rocking the earth;
Demons are wild in their mirth;
Mortals are shaking in dread,
Quiver and tremble in bed.
Boom, boom, boom, stumbling gloom
This appalling, wild, mad cyclone,
This horrible death groan,
Swallowed in chaos their doom.

The storm is past; dead are mangled, found,
The babe is crushed and mother left to weep,
And father—no more his welcome sound—
Hurled in a crushed mass by that cruel leap.

“My God! My blue-eyed boy,” the mother, crazed,
Stoops and with her hands some other boy has raised.
No daughter dear, none but her alone
Is all that is left of her once happy home.
Morning, the sun smiles on this mournful scene,
Heaps of debris where a hamlet once had been;
And dying embers show that fire has had a feast.
Hushed solemnity, broken now by piercing shriek,
Curdles the very life sap at its fount,
And racks the throbbing brain, when frenzied living, lost
ones seek.

O God! Can this be justice that Thou dost decree,
Or law immutable from eternity?
We come, we go, we know not how or where,
Back to the earth, then vanish into air.

POEMS OF LOVE

THEY LOVE BUT ONCE

THEY love but once, they who love well,
When young affections wane,
In dreamy silence ever dwell,
They never love again.

When deep, true love absorbs the whole
Of hearts whose every chord,
In answering beats ring through the soul
To every act or word.

What joy divine to be beloved
By woman pure and true,
From sordid thoughts so far removed—
Such bliss is for but few.

What purity, what rapture sweet,
To know that we possess
A maid whose every pulse will beat
To answer each caress.

The sun may cease to shine at noon,
The flowers may never blow,
Dark clouds may hide the silvery moon,
The rivers cease their flow.

The very earth refuse to move,
The sea pour out its tide,
The plaintive cooing of the dove
In lingering echoes bide.

But unalloyed affection deep
Will last while ages roll,
And time with solemn slowness creep
Unheeded o'er the soul.

Many a loved one gone to rest,
A bud nipped by death's frost,
While dear ones left behind do weep
And mourn the loved one lost.

Dark azure clouds will ever hide
The loved one from our sight,
In fancy still he's by our side
Through darkest shades of night.

AN OCEAN CHILD

I WILL not forget you, darling,
Though I wander far and wide;
You are present with me ever
As I'm sailing o'er the tide.
When in foreign lands I travel,
Your blest image I can see;
Yes, upon my heart's the impress,
Fadeless memories still of thee.

I am lonely now, my darling,
While at night on watch alone;
Yeasty billows 'neath me heaving,
Rock me on the ocean foam.
Next to thee I love this boundless
Waste of waters, fierce and free,
As we fly before the storm king
In our staunch bark merrily.

Soon I will return, my darling;
You shall be an ocean bride;
Then you'll be my guardian angel
On the blue Atlantic wide.
Spirits of the just will waft us
Safe along the briny deep,
As they calm the raging tempest,
Cherubs, watching while you sleep.



"The rugged cliffs of the Ozark purple mountains."—Page 27.

Dear old ocean, since my mother
Bore me on thy stormy breast,
Plunging through the foam-capped billows,
Ever more my sweetest rest;
And our bark shall be a cradle
Rocked by surges high and wild,
While old Neptune shrieks the message
Once again, an Ocean Child.

LOVERS' PARTING

TO lovingly linger at parting,
And kiss off the whispered farewells,
As blue eyes the tears they are starting,
And sighs as her bosom it swells.
Then laughingly murmur, "goodbye, dear."
But never releasing her clasp.
All lovers, though foolish, are shy, dear.
They imagine 'tis heaven, perhaps,
For heaven they tell us is ever
A place where the soul's always glad;
There loving supreme is in favor,
For no jealousy drives lovers mad.
All the heaven we know of is here, love,
When lovers are true to their plight;
For eyes show the welcome, or fear, love,
Yet the parting is lovers' delight,
They kiss a farewell and repeat it,
As something forgot, she must tell;
Then he whispers a secret to beat it,
With repeated adieu, fare you well.

SWEET, THINK OF ME WHEN I AM LONELY

SWEET, think of me when I am lonely,
Or poisoned breath shall whisper wrongs;
When old-time friends shall seem to shun me,
Then cheer me, Dear, with soothing songs.

As smiling through thy tears I see thee,
And hear thy voice, pathetic, low,
Come drifting to me in the nightfall,
As heart to heart our throbbings flow.

I know that angels bring the message,
And take its answer back to thee;
Though heaven withholds its visions,
In dreams and thoughts thy form I see.

It softens all my harsh complainings,
Dispels the clouds, when storms seem nigh,
For sadness flees, and hearts grow lighter,
And sunset splendors say, "goodbye."

FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE

WHAT is friendship?
Ties we think bound, are often broken
By a selfish motive, the sacrifice
Will come from deep seated honor, spoken
From the heart, where virtue's precepts rise
Not from a lack of love; to check dishonor,
From heart's affection will become a worship—
Constancy thus proven is true friendship.

There is not a spot on all this earth
Where congenial friendship's found
Reciprocal, a fair exchange
Of sentiments abound;
And should she be a rosebud bright;
And he a smooth-faced boy,
The glistening of her eyes would light
The fires of the lover's joy.

Entwined within each other's arms
The passion wild will glow;
Enraptured with each other's charms,
Electric currents flow.
It has been so from earliest dawn;
Fair Eve came clothed in light—
As lithe in limb as beauteous fawn—
As alabaster, white.

WHAT IS MY LOVE?

WHAT is my love? A full blown rose
So delicately tinted and graceful;
Each petal is perfect; its perfume so rare;
It rivals in splendor, with blushes as fair
As the sun's golden rays at the night-fall.

The sweet rosebud gives but a faint simile,
While its heart is bound up in its incense,
But with culture and love its petals so rare
Oft rival in beauty the full blown so fair;
Rare beauties unfold without pretence.

Loveliest gems, the bud and blown rose,
Beauty unfolding, unfolded in love;
Virgin of loveliness, matron divine,
Embalmed by the virtue, laurels entwine
Thy brow, that honor immaculate wove.

THE LILY AND THE ROSE OF WOMANHOOD

WHEN spring began to blush,
The emerald sod twinkled with dew drops;
In the mystic balmy air
Of the rhythmic moonlight glare,
As gathering night-fall bathes all in solemn hush
With love's forget-me-nots.

Bloom on, dear cherished thought,
Send forth the incense of that blossom's wealth,
In beauteous woman fair,
Or radiant virgin rare,
Within the arms where purity has sought
The noblest type of health.

The heart with rapture leaps,
When the lily and the rose of womanhood
Outvie their namesakes sweet,
While round-eyed daisies greet
The passerby, as among the violets he meets
Her strolling in the wood.

To love all beauteous things,
Whose tender rootlets twine around the heart
Of maidenhood in bower,
Of womanhood, or flower,
Is but the test of Nature's inner being;
Not perfection wrought in art.

LOVERS' TRYST

IN the glistening, mild September air,
The orchards with their tempting treasure
Of rosy dimpled apples, laughing;
This world with them is naught but pleasure.
The amorous breezes, cooing, kiss them,
(The blushing apples blush the deeper);
Then off they fly, with bee and fragrance,



"Where the lazy Drury sifts thru the overhanging willows,"—Page 27.

To seek the clover flower and creeper;
Then in they rush with incense loaded;
And cheer us with their whispered stories
Of woodland nymphs where brooklet hurries;
Then off they go where salt seashore is.
They live in sunlit verdure's coolness.
They haunt the sylvan shades, where lovers
Hide away in foliage deeper,
Or trembling, flickering sunlight hovers.
Ah, could they tell the honeyed nonsense
Of lingered kisses, pulses beating,
And make us feel the blissful pastime,
With oft repeated charms of greeting.
They feel and see, but never tell us,
The secret amours of those lovers;
But cool their brows of heated passion,
Clandestine pleasure hides and smothers.

WOMAN'S EYES

EYES that pierce the soul in sadness;
Eyes that melt the heart in gladness;
Sparkling eyes that glow and glisten,
Eyes that seem to speak and listen;
Dark brown eyes with silken lashes,
Eyes of melting depths and tender;
Midnight eyes with rival splendor,
Fill with liquid fire that flashes;
Eyes that smile through tears on loved ones,
Eyes madonna-like in pity,
Radiance shed like noonday suns;
We praise in prose and sing in ditty.
 Friendly eyes that serve in kindness,
 Making light for friends in blindness;
 Eyes that lend us inspiration;
 Eyes that keep us from temptation.
 They point to home where all is light,

They comfort bring in darkest night.
Blessing home and making happy,
Are mother's eyes so sweet and tender,
And wife's mild eyes that all remember;
Eyes that bless while they are giving
Consolation to the living;
Eyes that never seem to fret;
Eyes we never can forget.

THE MILK-MAID

WILD roses blow in the sparkling dew
And blush while the purple is glowing;
What a smiling, rosy, merry crew
That dance by the streamlet flowing,
On sweet Jessie's face, gay roses wild,
Your goddess of love adorning;
No flower or radiant beauty mild
Compares with her, in the morning.

Her flute-like notes, how they gliding trip
Through valley, o'er woodland and mountain;
They glide in glades, through meadows skip,
And laugh with the babbling fountain.
"Coo Boss, coo Boss!" The mellow calls ring,
Clear as the chimes in the belfry;
Vibrating echoes float back and bring
Lowing cows on their homeward way.

Milk in the pail like foamy yeast,
Now it streams and bounds and bubbles,
While the sleek and handsome lazy beast
Gurgles her cud or nibbles,
And switches her tail from side to side,
Well pleased with her milker's mildness;
While in the meadows, in fragrance, ride
Gaudy flowers in their wildness.



"Boys are boys."—Page 29.

Know ye the grace of a blushing rose
Coquettishly shy or merry,
The peach in velvety envy glows
With jealousy red as a cherry;
Yet the fragrant rose and the luscious peach
Their parents' riches squander;
To the rose or peach, sweet Jessie can teach;
While blushing, the rose and peach wonder.

A picture worthy our milkmaid's home
'Mid shadows with dewdrops spraying
The shady bowers where lovers may roam,
Cupid for pleasure is straying;
For he knows a trysting, leafy bower,
And he knows the time of meeting,
In early morn or the evening hour,
For time to all lovers is fleeting.

THE LOVER'S FIRST KISS

I KISSED my love in the gloaming,
On her trembling coral lips;
In her eyes shone beams from Venus,
I could feel the child-god's tips.

How the bow-string long did vibrate,
As it echoed through my soul;
It wrought exquisite fancies,
By the magic of its roll.

As it danced through every fiber
Of my brain to heart's delight,
For in dreams it seemed to linger
Thru the still hours of the night.

Can dreams be the soul's awakening,
Set free, while Morpheus holds
The mortal in his embraces?
As the spirit world unfolds.

A LOVER'S CHOICE

I SCENTED, in a shady grove,
The fragrance of a dainty rose;
On petals tremble liqu'd light,
Reflected rays of jewels bright.
A daring zephyr shook the flower;
The rose blushed deeper from that hour,
It blended in the swaying breeze
And smiled its welcome to the trees.

A humming bird, now buzzing, trips
To sip delight from honeyed lips;
It moved aside, then bending low
Its color deepened, while a glow
Of roguish shame o'erspread its face.
The flower evaded the embrace
Of daintiest lover on the wing,
Who, darting, flew away to bring
The sunshine on his emerald breast
With lovely tints. His suit was pressed.
So lovingly he wooed this gem,
Coquettish flower! 'Twould stoop. "Ahem!

'Tis my delight to have you try,"
The tempting rose could only sigh.
Rose, lovely dear, adieu, farewell;
I love another, a bluebell,
Who always welcomes me at sight,
To court sweet flowers is my delight.
Which of the two I love the best?
The fragrant rose is loveliest.

SHE WEPT IN SILENCE

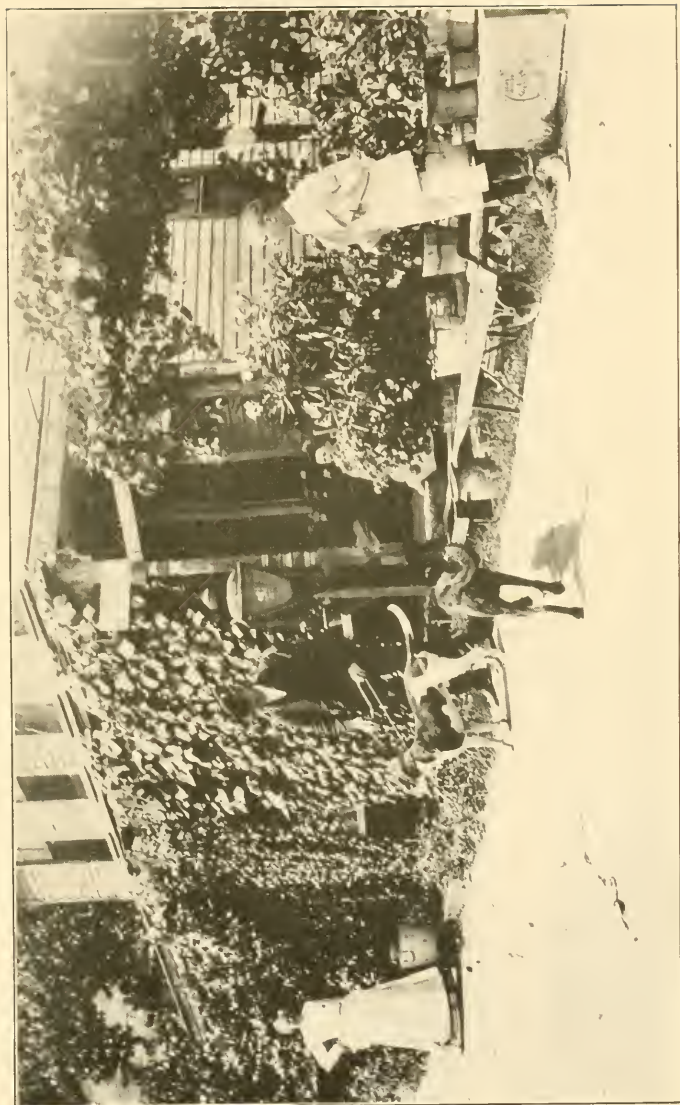
SHE wept in silence;
Those lips that ne'er complain
Moved with trembling emotion;
Her bosom heaved with broken sobs;
Her hands clasped tightly o'er her face;
Bent low her stately head;
Glistening tears trickled through slender fingers,
Held suspended, vibrated,
Then fell upon that swelling heart,
Dewdrops of bitter agony.
A woman weeping in secret sorrow
For one whose fate she mourned,
But could not change the current,
That eddying tide of doom,
That awful catastrophe,
On whose swift surface rushes
Her first love's dreams
And her stalwart lord to destruction.
Help! Help! Her brain now reels,
A human aspen shivering,
Swayed by the tempest of love;
Not an awakening to new life,
Or the throes of a mortal remorse,
But resignation, a decree inevitable,
Hope, alas, farewell! farewell!

I met her on the morrow,
No traces of her sorrow,
She laughed and sang with merry glee.
I marveled much her thus to see.
Can woman with her sobs and sighs,
Her scalding tears, and aching eyes,
Relieve her heart from breaking?
Or take away the pain and aching?
Her cherished happy day-dreams gone,
And live in somber shade, when sun
No smiling, happy day-dreams float;

When sails are reefed on storm-tossed boat,
The anchor cast, 'tis hope's last choice,
Awaiting till the pilot's voice
Shall call, "away"! Your work is done,
Unfurl the sails to cloudless sun,
And on the mystic shoreless sea
Sail into God's eternity.
Adieu! Adieu! We'll meet again
Far from the taunts and haunts of men,
Where genial roam together,
And bask in everlasting light,
Above the shadows of earth's night.

NO ONE CAN LOVE THAT CANNOT HATE

NO one can love that cannot hate,
In the true sense that lovers love;
Why, love is love because it's fate,
For no true love runs smooth they prove;
How passion comes you can't conceive,
You feel it creeping thru the brain,
So to the blood, as hearts relieve
Their burden from this burning flame.
To love, a woman lives her life;
She thinks she loves, becomes a wife.
This subtle passion led her wrong,
Then life's a burden short or long;
She has no power should Cupid fling
An arrow deep, from his bow string,
Into her heart that never knew
The vital power that love could do.
Even then she may mistaken be,
For love is blind, she cannot see;
Blindfolded thru the world they go,
Cupid and woman, to and fro;
A pretty pair they are together,
A destiny that lasts forever;



"That cozy good hotel,"—Page 32.

A woman's fancy you may tickle,
For woman's love is always fickle.
Dotes awhile on some illusion
With unrestrained joys profusion;
High up as heaven she will rise,
Then back to earth with tears and sighs;
Yes, woman she is born to love,
But whom she loves, it's hard to prove,
In fact, I don't believe she knows;
When the flame is kindled off she goes.
She's like a powder magazine,
Where there's a spark a flame is seen;
For love's a flame, they tell us so,
If explosive, 'twould wreck, you know.
Why, God himself He took the risk,
From heaven's high dome to earth did frisk
And sweetest charms with virgin shared,
While all the heavenly hosts they stared.
If heaven knelt down to woman's love,
And mortal man, altho he strove,
Was outwitted by his God,
Proves woman rules the world with love.
Whether woman caused the row in heaven,
By Michael's jealousy, was driven,
His Satanic majesty down to hell,
I never knew, they never tell,
Tho the devil seems to have a spite
At woman, and he may be right,
Since he the secret hides to hold;
If he woman told, all would unfold,
A secret, a woman never keeps,
And to her friends before she sleeps
She tells the whole and something more;
It all leaks out, the same old score.
Yes, how would heaven or earth or hell
Find out the news, unless she'd tell.
Ah, Virgin mother, child her god;
She rules in heaven with holy love;

She sweetens home, she sweetens life,
Was loved of God, was loved as wife.
We all at last our homage bring—
At woman's feet our hearts we fling.
She tramples some or fondles others
Or says she loves some as her brothers.
Her fancy is her various whim;
Her motive served, she's thru with them.
In ecstasy she loves or hates;
Has no control, one of the fates
That rules man's passion by her will;
It may be well or turn to ill,
A practice dangerous at best;
You take the risk, she knows the rest.
There's no accounting here or there,
We men are subject to her snare;
Of course, I'm of that foolish batch,
Against her wiles I am no match.
It has been so, since mother Eve
Was tempted by that serpent knave.
He must have been a gay old lover
That did beguile our good old mother.
Before the youngsters are half grown,
They fall in love, elope from home.
This subtle passion's in their blood;
May turn out bad, may turn out good;
It's nature's law that it should be,
If not, no families, you see,
Would ever flourish on this earth;
How could we live without a birth?
With all your wish and strong resolve,
You never can this mystery solve.

BRIGHT EYES

BRIGHT eyes, ye pierce the midnight gloom
Of shadowy melancholy;
Ye light us to that land of dreams;
Ye bring us peace and all that teems
With angelic purity,—
Redeem us from earth's care and folly.

These sweet visitations
Allay our fears;
Silken fringed, bewitching eyes,
Smiling thru tears.

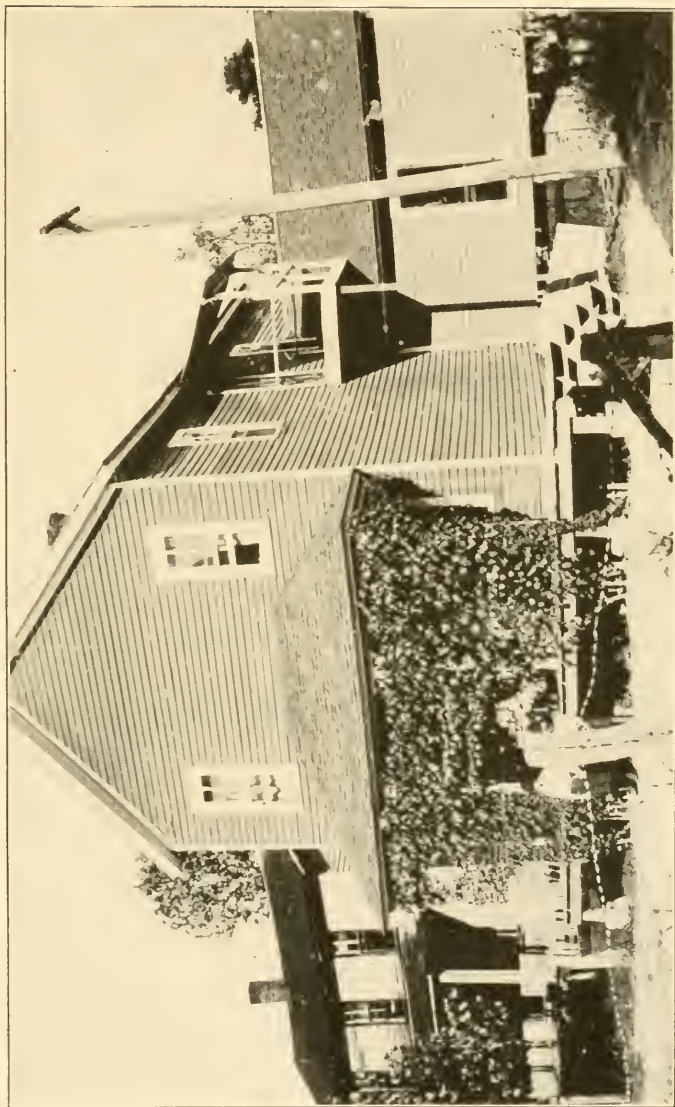
Could I kiss those dear eyes
And make them immortal,
A passport they would serve
Thru Heaven's portal.

Amen.

WOMAN

THE dainty touch of her finger tips;
The blush on her cheek; those rose-bud lips;
Her musical voice, so sweet and low,
Like sparkling waters that rippling flow;
Her blue eyes shine with a silver light
In the mellow rays of the moon-lit night,
While the diamond points of the stars they flash,
Reflected jewels through silken lash.

The crowning wealth of her golden hair,
With straying ringlets o'er forehead fair;
The shapely mould of her neck, and white
Sweet radiant beauty, in heavenly light,
Not angel, but woman born to love,
When she brings us the purity from above,
Descending to earth like falling stars
To read us the saintly calendars.



Where "Makanda Floods" was written.—Page 36.

POEMS OF PATRIOTISM AND POLITICS

OUR FLAG

GOD bless our flag, that dear old flag,
Heaven's own emblem from above,
In the blue vault the stars they shine,
While 'round its folds the stripes entwine,
Our bright bands of true love.

Our flag now waves in every land
With its glittering host of stars,
Our battleships are strong and swift,
All nations now in honor lift
Their welcome to our tars.

We claim our own, we give what's due,
To every nation, large or small.
Our commerce sails on every sea,
They know that we love liberty,
With justice to them all.

Our ship of state is nobly manned,
O'er troubled waters glides along,
See, light effulgence bursting wide,
The nation's on the rising tide,
Loud rolls the joyful song.

America, home of the free,
The oppressed of other lands
Have sought a home in time of need,
No church of state, no binding creed,
Free before God they stand.

Unfurl the flag out to the breeze,
O'er all our schools Old Glory wave,
Let patriotic sons of sires
Dishonor not the dead, whose fires
Of martial glory did them lave.

WARRIORS OF THE SPIRIT

(The Doukhoborsi, or Warriors of the Spirit, are a religious sect, self-supporting, industrious, somewhat like our own Quakers. They will not serve in the army. The Russian officials confiscated their property, beat them, put them in prison, and finally succeeded in driving them from Russia in a helpless condition, as they had done the Jews a few years before. These helpless men, women and children went to the Island of Cypress, in the Mediterranean Sea, under the protection of the English flag. Now they have settled in Canada. Can any country expect to prosper and to lead the world in an international peace conference that allows such inhuman practices?)

THE Warriors of the Spirit
Have been driven from their land
By officials ever cruel,
A cowardly Russian band.

What a mockery, this Russian,
Oh, this czar upon his throne,
With his peaceful proclamation,
Driving helpless from their home!

See this autocrat imperial,
With his despotic crew,
Make the Doukhoborsi follow
The ejection of the Jew.

O! Great God, and will you suffer
Tyrants so to scourge the land,
And persecute this loyal,
Moral, peaceful, loving band?

Let them hasten to the Levant,
Cypress, island of the sea,
Where there's freedom from oppression
Under England's flag so free.

You are safe from whip and pillage,
And from cowardly braggarts, too.
Worship God as conscience dictates,
As the Jews did, so can you.



"Solitude."—Page 43.

Tyranny will cease forever;
God's before you leading on,
While free men stand and beckon,
For the sore oppressed to come.

Let justice feast her vengeance,
When she strikes oppression down,
In the havoc of the battle,
None but the dishonored frown.

They that love men show them mercy;
Just in thought, be just in deed.
Kindness every one should cherish;
Great souls help the weak in need.

OOM PAUL AND JOHN BULL

JOHNNIE Bull and Uncle Paul
Have got into a racket;
Oom Kruger, he is full of gall,
Be off, John Bull, your troops and all,
Or I will warm your jacket.

(Johnnie, he was mystified,
And yet he dare not run, sir),
You Britishers, you know you lied;
I will not ask you to divide,
I'll have it all or none, sir.

Joubert came, at Symons flew,
And he did give him thunder,
As 'round Dundee his forces drew;
The British they felt fearful blue;
While all the world did wonder.

Near Glencoe heights Symons fell,
A fighting man was he, sir,
Heading his troops, he went pell-mell
Through shot and shell, though hot as hell;
No braver man could be, sir.

From Ladysmith one dark night,
The British made a dash, sir;
The Boers they hustled out of sight,
While battery mules stampeded right
To the Boers, like a flash, sir.

Gloucesters and Fusiliers
Were brave, no one can doubt it,
They lost their powder it appears,
And field battery, then their careers
Were changed, no doubt about it.

Boers in all South Africa
Are chafing John Bull's ears, sir,
While up and ready for the fray,
Bombarding Ladysmith today;
The British in arrears, sir.

Troops are coming o'er the deep,
Her navy's ready now, sir.
Should Buller start he will not creep,
But to the Orange Transvaal sweep,
And join them in the row, sir.

No one wishes any harm
To happen to the Boers, sir.
They felt that fighting was the charm
The British nation to alarm,
And now the lion roars, sir.

What may happen, if not slow,
To Transvaal, Orange State, sir;
Which will the other over-throw?
By fighting, every man may show,
What's right, what's wrong, their fates, sir.



"Its somber shades in leafy dells."—Page 43.

Should Uetlanders get their right,
Then all may yet be well, sir;
And settle down after the fight,
Just laws for all, and no affright,
In peace and quiet dwell, sir.

Commerce, it will take the lead
Where gold and diamonds flash, sir;
No matter what the race or breed,
All people of the land when freed,
Will worship as they wish, sir.

TOMMY ATKINS

WHO are with the British army?
Who are for the Union Jack?
Prince and peasant, Tommy Atkins;
The whole nation's at your back.

You may not soon return again
While the British lion roars;
You'll have to reckon with the foe,
The South Afric surly Boers.

You have left your homes and sweethearts,
You have crossed the stormy sea,
You never will capitulate,
You can die, but will be free.

Your broad, free British Empire
Is the boast of England's race—
Free for all to come and go;
Yes, at any time or place.

The navy and your friends at home,
They will guard your homes and right,
And your wives and children comfort,
When you march away to fight.

The job looks rather tough just now,
And your ranks are very thin,
Stick to them, lads, a little while,
When the troopers come, you'll win.

Paul Kruger then may change his mind,
He is acting rather queer;
He will have to pay expenses,
It will cost him mighty dear.

There is no mistake about it,
He's a fighter from long taw;
Long or short, he's bound to lose;
Should the lion get his paw

Upon his Free State capital;
Tommy Atkins will be there,
And will march in trim and jaunty,
Should he win the lion's share.

Yes, your colors will be flying;
Though you're homesick, never mind,
While the fifes and drums are playing—
"The Girl I left behind."

The dear ladies Africanda
May not like you, still you'll find
There are lots at home that love you,
The dear girls you left behind.

When the last hard fight is over,
With mistaken Boers so brave,
You will return safe back again
O'er the blue Atlantic wave.

Good luck to you, Tommy Atkins,
You're a jolly fighting boy,
And your country's pride and safety
You will fight for, win or die.

TO THE TAGAL CHIEF—AGGIE

TREACHEROUS Filipino chief,
Bloody bastard, mongrel thief;
You will surely come to grief
In your throes; you're past relief.

You can never put aside
Hate and vengeance with your pride,
And traitor blood of savage tribe,
All within a Spanish hide.

True, your praises some will sing,
(A weak congressman, poor thing!)
Let Atkinson or Rogers fling
Rancid bosh, without a sting.

Bonaparte you tried to ape,
You failed at arms,—try red tape.
With shallow wit and jargon prate,
Him you cannot emulate.

Why provoke your soldier boys
With your cowardly blustering noise?
Such a traitor in disguise
The brave islanders despise.



"Its gaunt, grim, silent, craggy hills."—Page 43.

POEMS OF RELIGION AND MORALITY

VISIONS OF THE NIGHT

BEAUTEOUS visions of the night,
Radiant in the moon's pale light,
Fleecy clouds now floating by
Painting pictures in the sky.
Now the moon is sailing fast
Through the starry vault so vast,
Tinting with its beams the clouds,
Draperies like heavenly shrouds.
Rapturously we gaze above,
Can it be that those we love,
No more of earth are roaming free
In God's vast eternity?
Heaven is God's ethereal realm;
Seraphim are at the helm
Guiding on through time and space,
Celestial messengers apace;
The soul in ecstasy would be
Blest with God, its deity.

SABBATH BELLS

A PEACEFUL light broods on the still morning air,
This blest day of rest, this Sabbath so fair;
A melody floats on the sun's golden rays,
Calling to worship, with anthems of praise.
These bells in our childhood the same burden bore,
And still ring as sweet as in bright days of yore,
For still floating higher and nearer they come
To call us from earth to that mystical home
To dwell with our loved ones departed.

Those loved ones have left us in visions so bright;
They call on us ever to follow the light;
They have crossed the dark river to that golden shore,
And stand by its waters to welcome us o'er.
In hymns of thanksgiving their glad voices meet
The dear ones who join them in transports to greet,
We'll follow their flight through the blest realms of light,
Guided by brightness, through shadows of night,
To dwell with our loved ones departed.

EASTER

THE messengers of God, athwart the heavens they fly;
The swift archangel trump is heard,
The great Jehovah summoning the mighty hosts of heaven:
"To earth! to earth! and crown your risen Lord."
The rush of angel wings amid the dying stars
Catch the first glint of resurrection morn;
The speediest of the band have rolled away the stone
And ushered in upon the world life's immortality.
We burst the bonds, for death hath lost its power—
Oh, grave, where is thy victory! Oh, Death, where is thy
sting?
We now cast off this load of old mortality;
Emerge into light, where there's no night;
Set free to roam eternity, for heaven's the soul's delight;
And hear the mighty orchestra in God's cathedral grand;
And on the ramparts view the throng, and with our loved ones
stand,
There watch the clouds of sorrow roll away, away! away!
And bask in everlasting light of everlasting day,
To learn the right by wisdoms light, God's heritage to man.
It was, it is, and will remain to all eternity;
'Tis wisdom's power; time does its work; 'twas ever Nature's
plan.

MORNING DAWNS, SHADOWS FLEE

(Read before the First Congregational Church of Makanda, Illinois, at the Anniversary meeting, August 6, 1900.)

HAVE we not as religionists made things mysterious,
And bridled the scepter of thought?
Have we not thro' ages been governed by bigotry?
By the rack and the dungeon we wrought?
And battlements builded with errors gigantic;
We strangled each thought at its birth;
Then we fattened, like swine, on deception and cruelty,
When the power of the church ruled the earth.

Then the cries of disaster rang wilder and faster,
Than the hissing, loud roar of the deep,
While the blaze of the fagot made laughter an anguish,
And caused the death-demon to weep.
They have died as martyrs to thought, and have written
On pages that glisten with fame;
They will show to the children thro' ages eternal
That they lived and died for a Name.

Let the cries of the masters roll along down the ages—
Let example and thought lead the way—
Let the state constitutional drive out church oppression,
No churchman shall rule in our day.
An era has dawned that will wipe away bigotry,
Let the young and the vigorous mind grow.
The mystic old cobwebs are swept from the monast'ry,
Let the purer and deeper thoughts flow.

Let schools where theology's taught to our children
Be stripped of their dogmatic lore;
Let reason explore the old tomes 'clesiastic,
And the young mind with truths of the actual store;
Methinks I can hear in the past night the moaning,
Where old superstitions have laid down to rest;
A nightmare of horror to them, when the masses
With science and logic resolve them to test.

Oh, glorious youth! Thou art freed from the shackles
 That encumbered thy saintly old sire;
 There is nothing mysterious will daunt or repel thee,
 Placing God in His majesty higher.
 Thou wilt find that the arch-fiend, the ruler of darkness,
 Himself and his place is a myth of the past;
 And the Holy-of-holies thou wilt enter more sacred,
 With companions congenial at last.

I see a dim and distant morning dawn;
 It breaks to show a clearer, holier day,
 To light mankind along a brighter way
 With all the ancient, mystic light withdrawn;
 It is a burst of loved, melodious song
 Swelling with truth, so that we must obey
 And live the right, and let the past decay,
 Purging itself of all religious wrong.
 We live upon this verge of mighty truth,
 Of unrestrained belief and liberty,
 Of what is real and actual in life.
 There is no God of awful wrath; forsooth,
 A power of right throughout eternity
 Guides thoughtful man through harmony and strife.

SLUMBER

"Sleep
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear
 A better state than waking; death than sleep."
 —Wordsworth.

Let me sleep the long sleep that knows no awaking,
 Where slumber is sweeter the longer we sleep;
 No partings, no heartaches, for there's no forsaking
 In time or eternity, upland or deep;
 All turbulent spirits reposing forever,
 Restful and silent, where dreams never wake.
 Perpetually rolls the one night in the ever,
 For sleep is eternal, when life we forsake.

The present alone, it belongs to the living;
We partake of the share that is due and are gone;
We give back the air that is used in life's breathing,
While blood, flesh and bones crumble back one by one.
From mounds where we're buried spring grasses and flowers,
Renewing each other, as men we replace;
While birth is immortal, so slumber is ours,
The passport from time to that region of space.

When earth closes o'er us a canopy grander
Than rich, royal purple spreads over our bed;
In sunshine or storm, no stranger to wander,
But peacefully sleeping where millions of dead
Are lying in restful repose 'mid the flowers,
Or beautiful coral caves down in the sea,
Where mythical mermaids keep watch in pearl bowers,
As ages are rolling by eternally.

O, blissful oblivion, leveler, quiet,
An opiate, sweeter and truer than life!
Eternal's the rest, there's no waking from it;
All will soon slumber as husband and wife—
There are countless millions that come and pass over,
Some laughing, some crying—they toil and are gone,
The statesman, the soldier, the worker, the lover,
With all boasted vanity, life's work hard won.

Your pension is peace, when life is the forfeit;
You lay down this troublesome, aching old frame—
It paid all its debts with troubles a-surfeit;
The warlike are resting, for peace is their fame.
Then give me that sleep that knows no awaking,
Where slumber is sweeter the longer we sleep;
No partings, no heartaches, for there's no forsaking
In time or eternity, upland or deep.

AN APPARITION

A STRANGE sensation, as 'twere trembling air;
No sound, nor ray to break the stilly gloom;
Now vibrates from tiniest point, appear
In form, the features of the one most dear;
The light, it came from eyes, and in the room
Her bright orbs cast a silvery glare;
Her face was clear as pearls from out the deep;
Her raiment purpling shadow, all ashudder.
The figure floated as an airy light;
Her very breath, it seemed to breathe on night
A delicious opiate, like a sweet odor,
Lulling me to oblivious sleep.

WE SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE

(To my friend, Mina Walker Allen).

WE search for knowledge from the book of facts;
History of the past will lend us light,
Pointing out the problems yet to solve,
Illuminate the darkness, dissipate the wrong,
As the heaven of justice works a sure reform.
Established rules, by superstition rooted,
Exhaling opiates as a poisonous night shade—
Intoxicating to delirium,
Sapping and coercing the sensibilities—
Reason's throne will totter, quaking
At this ghostly phantasmagoria
Of ignorance and vice, with cunning
Hid behind established rule or law,
Whose thin covering shields but cannot thwart
The poisoning fangs or rob them of their venom.
Knowledge is not wisdom, but wisdom is justice.
Build upon a strong foundation.
To tear down the whole superstructure
Is better than to let it totter and fall.
Why not amend, take out the diseased part?
Let life be nobility of purpose.



A view of Giant City, near Makanda.

AN IDLE EVENING'S THOUGHT

A CONGENIAL companion mellows down life,
Smoothes the rough roadway we all have to tread
In youth or in age, should the one be your wife
Or some gentle spirit you never can wed.
Friendship will ripen, when the heart is in bloom
And blood courses warm with affectionate glow;
If earth can be heaven, while this side of the tomb,
Our bark will glide smoothly on life's ebb and flow.
The stream may grow turbulent, none can foresee;
By shoals, over rapids, through gorges it winds,
Then out by the meadows, down into the sea,
Then loses itself, as with others, it finds
The boundless great space of God's eternity.

The hope that we cherish always lives on,
Expanding in love to a holier race,
For hope is our anchor, by faith it is won,
While charity warms with her glow and her grace,
The plains and the hills and eternal rocks,
Will welcome the millions in ages to come;
The green pastures dotted with herds and with flocks,
And brooklets that kiss the gay flowers as they run.
Dame Nature was wise, when she made this great earth,
The fowls of the air and the fish of the sea,
Made man the bravest, gave woman more worth,
Ah, this glorious heritage comes with our birth.

A FRAGMENT

O GLORIOUS thought that brings to me such hallowed
memories,
Bathing my soul in lucid grandeur, purifying
The very atmosphere that surrounds my passioned brain,
Quieting the impulses that leap tumultuously through my blood,
Fortifying the prostrate nerves by firm yet kindly words,
A light shining in the darkness of despair, illuminating.

A FRIEND IN NEED

(Tune: "Bonnie Blue Flag".)

WE all should love a friend in need,
True friendship's never bought,
A friend in need's a friend indeed,
Why that's the test or naught.
You may sympathize or pity,
Why priests would do no less,
But he that loves a friend in need,
Will shield and help and bless.

(Chorus)

Come on, come on, we all must brothers be,
Don't wait, but help to bring about the blessed jubilee.

Yes, let us try to do our best
By kindly words and deeds,
By helping others we are blest,
By actions, not by creeds.
Why, your sympathy or pity
Will not the orphans feed,
A thousand ways to help along
Those in distress or need.

(Chorus)

Should we them help, yes, friends will come,
In our distress or need,
Example brings them to our home,
Bread cast on waters feed.
Then your sympathy and pity
May be the things we need,
Our light will shine that all can see
God's blessing in our need.

(Chorus)

IS IT A SIN?

IT'S fun to watch them dancing,
The light-hearted, giddy, gay,
When skipping through the polka,
Or when waltzing whirl away.

Down the outside, watch them go,
Now the center—opera reel—
Now swing across the corners,
Back and forward, see them wheel.

Now forming for a quadrille,
See how gracefully they bow,
Promenade, now right and left;
How the fluttering beauties glow.

Some say it's very wicked,
When they light fantastic trip.
Should it really be a sin,
Watch them into hades skip.

THE DEBAUCHE

"Be sure your sins will find you out."

IS graceful, beauteous form in woman
The true ideal of virtuous worth?
Is superb posture a mental omen;
The superior to aught on earth?
What is it that presages culture?
The movement, language or principle;
Material or ethereal sculpture;
A something wholly invisible,
A living, guiding, soothing agent,
Spiritual, or of the earth, dust,
Passion ruling, a gaudy pageant?
Why man builds ideals by his lust

On regal form with angelic face;
And are they not conceptions that fell,
By which guilty-cultured fibres trace
A thrilling something we dare not tell—
A burning desire, which we possess,
That sears our conscience as with a fire—
An illicit love that might caress
Beauty voluptuous, the desire?

Man's affinity is his desire.

When guided by honor and ruled by culture,
His is not sensual pleasure, but higher;
When led by brutish instincts, the vulture
That would pluck out all that is noble,
Then cast aside the odious remnant—
He brings destruction by his foible,
Not that the victim was as sinful
As destroyer of security.
Then why not strengthen the defenseless;
Curb licentiousness by purity;
In your own nature spurn the baseness;
Be true to yourself and to your God.
A prize has little worth without strife,
Fortify against sinful weakness,
Make your intellect the vigorous light,
A clear conscience brings a happy life,
The vile inordinate despoiler
Of an innocent, pure, virgin life
Stands accursed, a debauched reviler,
An assassin of woman's virtue—
Outward of a pleasing and manly form;
Yet spawn of low degeneracy, the spew
From iniquitous cess-pools drawn.
Drink bitter dregs of your accursed life;
Rankle in infamy's leprous gall,
Besmirched and sodden in cancerous rife,
Crime has banished from heaven's help, your call;



"The rugged rocks and gorges deep."—Page 100.

Fall to rise no more, that of the damned,
A blurred, bloated, living agony,
Plucked out from all that is pure, crammed
Full of putrefying infamy.

Ye devastators of pleasant homes,
Your fiendish contrived, ingenious
Villanies cause agony and groans;
Your presence pollutes the virtuous,
Think not to hide your accursed crimes,
For odors arise from each vile carcass,
Your soul's shut out from heaven, in hell find
Other souls of debauchées in excess,
Gourmands of sensual rottenness;
Ye cannot be cleansed by the fires of hell,
So where, in the universe of godliness,
Can such polluting profligates dwell?

BEGGARS AND MISCREANTS

"Man to man, the world o'er,
Shall brothers be for a' that."
—Burns.

BEGGARS and miscreants,
Ye poor homeless outcasts,
Shiver in misery
In the cold winter blasts.
Garments that's cast away,
Food from the garbage old,
Rake from the fetid mass,
Eat filth through rigid cold.
Blar-eyed, cadaverous.
Hearts cold as icicles,
Vicious through penury,
Through thin veins blood trickles,
Spiritless, vultures bold,
No hope or destiny
Soulless, remorselessly
Children of misery.

Why such in this fair land?
When shall this squalor cease?
Ye immoral vampires,
In luxurious ease
Boast not, while ignorance
Riots in wickedness;
Ye who in affluence
Withhold through niggardness.

There is a God above
Withholds from you his love,
While you your vengeance wreak.
Arise, help the damned and weak.
Great God! So much and sad.
Widows, fatherless, mad!
Shall nations listless stand,
While hoards within the land
By vice and hunger die?
Raise loud the hue and cry,
Out from the depths of sin
Your brothers help to win.
Example be your life,
Order from out of strife,
Kindness, severe but true,
Salvation rests with you,
God gives you strength, and will
His purposes fulfill.



*"The picture can give us but one of the many
Pleasing or startling electrical shocks."—Page 101.*

POEMS OF FRIENDSHIP AND
REMINISCENCES

TO MY FRIEND, EZRA CRANE

GOOD friends are few and far between;
Many friends not what they seem—
Some are gay, some fat, some lean,
Some seem sour, yet a conscious gleam
In splendid fellowship redeem—
With true nobility they teem;
Some are dull and awful slow,
Yet these are always on the go
And never miss a chance to show
You kindnesses and love bestow.
They strew your path, as roses blow,
With fragrant welcomes, don't you know?
How often, when we're blue or sad,
We meet or hear from such a lad;
He lifts you up, tho not your dad.
The blues fly off and you are glad.
You laugh and sing, Yes, sir, by gad;
Yet some that's mean call this a fad.
Just let them call, who cares a damn.
I like the true, I hate the sham,
A moral coward is not a man.
I'd rather butt the "Collins Ram,"
Be knocked to pieces by the slam,
Than be the dupe of goat or lamb.

IN MEMORY OF ROSS L. HALSTEAD

HARK, what's that wailing sound we hear
In the solemn midnight hour.
A funeral cortege on its way,
With a loved one from afar.
The doleful murmur of the wind,
And the glittering moon's pale ray,
Along the dismal road they wind,
In mournful silence moving slow,
They bear that young now pale dead friend,
With affection dear, yet solemnly;
His youthful friends walk noiselessly
And bring him to his home once more.
He died in sunny south land
Amid the mountain pines that wave
And whisper low sad notes of love,
With balmy breath breathed on his bier,
A requiem with incense sweet,
For the adopted friend they loved.
On the mountain top o'erlooking
The rugged rocks and gorges deep,
Where quiet, sluggish waters creep
Along the winding path below,
And the whistling engine bounds along
Waking the echoes with its shriek,
Leaving behind a fiery trail;
Now hid in darkness, now gone,
In his own mountain home he lies.
Where friends of his youth are sleeping;
Young and old men, matrons, maidens,
Must all lie down to quiet sleep
In the bosom of mother earth,
To moulder back from whence they came—
In peace with all mankind, to wait
Till God's own purposes shall call
A stop to this earth's usefulness,
And time with earth shall be no more.



Home of the Author in Chester, England.—Page 104.

ON THE DEATH OF ALLEN PENROD

MIDNIGHT—when the hills breathed a solemn adieu
To a soul quietly passing to its God.
We know not whence it came or whither its destiny.
Far beyond the limits of our expanding vision
There is a boundless eternity of space
Co-equal and parallel with immortality.
Expanse beyond expanse, a shoreless ocean
In which floats this great universe of worlds,
Answering to the mission by destiny created—
These are the material parts of God's great economy!
Then pray tell me what is the ethereal,
The spirituality, unencumbered by matter?
For we reason as mortals and know not of life
That has cast off the mortal part that cumberers.
O death! is there a sting? Burst the bonds,
For a glorious immortality is our victory.
Like the noxious vapors becoming purified,
So the pure principle in this life formed
Lives on in that spiritual world, its home.
Oh, my beloved friend, it is our loss, your great gain
To mingle in love with affinities,
A soul expanding in purity of purpose
Evolving into a higher life, drawing its inspiration
From the fountain of truth, transplanted
Into the spirit land, where flows the water of life.
Farewell, a kind adieu, until we meet again.

ON SEEING A PHOTOGRAPH OF HER

NO picture can give us the soulful expression
Of a face, where the intellect feels what it sees;
It's insipid and vacant, compared with the flashes
That the eyes lend to anger, now with pathos appease;
The picture can give us but one of the many
Pleasing or startling electrical shocks;
While a face, with a heart and a mind that is noble,
Conveys, to our wonder, the soul in its looks.

TO NELL GWYNNE

WHILE Nellie Gwynne was handsome,
The crazy jade was vain;
The storm was in her sunshine,
A mixture of disdain.

She dallied gay with passions,
On human heartstrings played,
And laughed at strong men's follies
Whose emotions wild she swayed.

Ah, charming Nell, you've suffered
For all your antics wild,
To laugh or sob at fancies,
You wayward, giddy child.

True, loving was your birthright,
But shattered hearts you fling;
Though sinning loved the fonder,
As palaced knight and king.

Yes, love with sin grows sweeter
As emotive bosoms swell
In ecstatic love delighted:
Such love's a burning hell.

TO A BEAUTY

BLUE eyes with ringlets golden,
A blushing rosebud gay,
In fluffy frilled white drapery,
In waving, dazzling ray.

Of love and beauty mingling,
In Autumn's lavish arms;
Nature's incomparable
With woman's lovely charms.

TO MISS RUTH SCHWARTZ

RUTH, my darling, you're a sweet little nymph,
A blossoming rosebud of gladness and joy,
Your innocent beauty is Nature's own art
Bubbling over with laughter and merriment, why?
Because you're so winsome, delightfully shy,
Your negligee elegance, bright fairy queen,
As you swing like an Oriole's nest in the wind,
While the branches above cast their shadow and sheen.
When like that gay bird from the nest you have flown,
We still shall commune with your image divine,
For it remains with us wherever you roam,
As it dwells with your love in the heart's glad sunshine.
The Romans may boast of Diana's great power,
The queen of the goddesses' beautiful bower,
But yours will remain a love treasure shrine
Far dearer to us than their goddess divine.

Our friends and our friendships will soon pass away,
But your love and its sweetness will still with us stay,
For your heart is as constant and true as pure gold,
It may mellow with years, but never grow old.

MEMORIES OF BOYHOOD

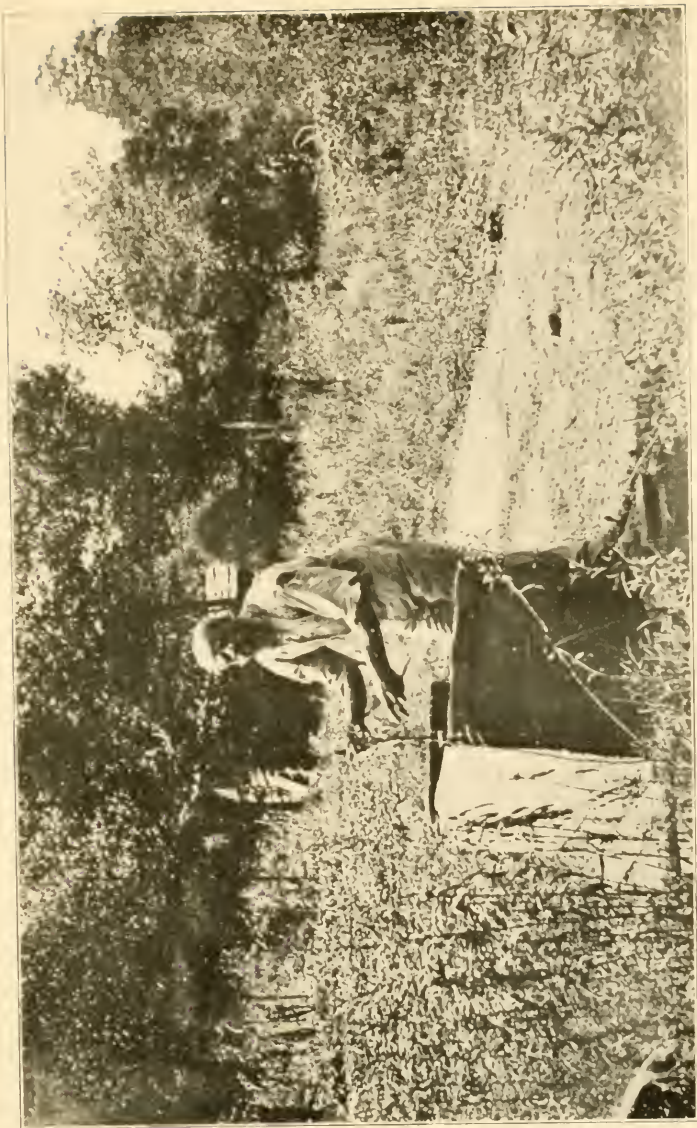
SWEET memories of that dear old time
From boyhood to our prime;
How happy with our playmates then
In days of bright sunshine.
We roamed through field, o'er hill and dale;
We waded in the brook;
How joyous then in careless way,
We sought the shady nook.
We'd chase the bumblebees about;
We'd watch the clouds go by,
Or tumble in the grass and shout!
O, how the time would fly!

When we were boys, when we were boys,
So sportive, glad and free—
Could we recall those happy days,
How bright the world would be.

Now we're old, long past our prime,
Our hearts yet throb with joy
To watch the youngsters in their glee,
The happy world's the boy.

MY CHESTER BOYHOOD

DEAR scenes, when I, a boy,
Come trooping through my brain,
With sunlight's golden haze
On hawthorn hedges plays,
In grassy lanes where romping boys
With songbirds' melody, and noise
Are mingling with perfume and flowers
In England's fields and sylvan bowers.
What a noisy, joyous troop were we,
Now racing madly 'long the Dee,
To plunge into its briny flood,
With shouts of "My, but this is good."
Away we'd dive and swim and float,
And gather on some passing boat,
And what a lark it was to ride
Upon the swelling, rising tide,
Then leap into the flood and yell
As none but boys can know or tell,
All this I did, my comrades, more,
Those madcap, daring boys of yore.



Old Mose, an ex-slave. — Page 105

PLANTATION SHUCKING SONG

LET de fiddle play, make de banjo sing,
See dem a comin', hear dat ol' bell ring;
Massa an' Missus will be here tonight;
Darkies, shuck that co'n wid all yo' might;
Take dem shucks away, an' gib 'em all a chance;
Must pile out dat co'n, befo' we can dance;
Hump to it, boys, day will beat us shor;
Climb off dat pile dar, keep down on de floor.

Let de fiddle play, make dat banjo ring,
All dat co'n am shucked, hear de darkies sing;
De colored folks am happy, jus' see dem dance;
Lif' up dem feet, dare, gib dat gal a chance;
Oh gosh! Hear dem scows, how da hit dat floor;
Golly! How de sweat off those nigs do po';
Hoe it down, Dinah, wid all your life;
Dis gemmen, he will make dat gal his wife.

De rooster am a-crowin',
De ho'n it am a blowin'
De gals all am a-laffin',
Darkies am a-chaffin';
See, daylight am a-peepin',
De white folks am a-sleepin',
All going home to breakfas'
An' de cotton-fields once mo'.

CHIMES

HEAR the bells of St. Peter's, dong-ding-dong;
Ding-aling-ding, say the bells of St. John's;
Fathers and mothers, come along, ding-dong;
Ding-aling-ding, children, all come and sing.
Steady, now steady! All join in the throng;
Run, all are ready, it won't take you long;
Hear the bells! They are ringing! Dong-ding-dong;
Ding-aling-dong, children, join in the song.

MEMORY AND HOPE

OUR youthful loves and fancies
We never can forget;
We dream and ponder o'er them
Until life's sun is set.
Bright, happy, smiling faces
Will haunt us in our dreams,
They are pictured in our memory,
Those tranquil happy scenes.

Those sweet young joyous faces
Are a pleasure ever new,
A panorama ever
Exquisite to review.

As passing on our journey
To taste the bliss of yore,
It mellows life's rough passage,
The light it casts before.
While waiting for the message
That soon, ere long, will come,
With guardian angels waiting
To welcome us at home.

REMINISCENCES AND AIRCASTLES

SWEET is the song tuned by generous impulse,
When the strings of the harp that swells in the breast
Awaken the chords that have slept long forgotten;
Now a flood of enchantment will soothe you to rest.
Flow on ye pure spectral strains that have slumbered;
Ye haunt me in visions 'mid youthful alloy,
'Tis refreshing to view the bright spots in my memory,
I rapturously mingle in games as a boy.

Glorious joy when youth bursts off the shackles,
Encumbering the babe, we are wild in our glee,
Bold in our mirth, and as loud and as boisterous
As blue bounding billows awaking the sea;
Then riding the storm of the heart's quick pulsations,
Its tumult and tumble in high tide of play,
We recklessly dash by all barriers and breakers,
In frantic, gay merriment pass the long day.

O youth, thou art blest with forgetfulness ever;
Thy fiery young spirit will surge and be free,
You cast off the cares like the froth from the billows
On the shores of life's ocean, as tides from the sea;
And drift on the ebb and the flow of the waters
That rock you to sleep on their murmuring swell,
Where cherubs are watching, while waves' wild commotion
Is pounding and sounding a funeral knell.

Still the eye of the soul is hope's safest compass;
It will steer us past dangers and bring us to port,
This building of castles, tho' flimsy and airy,
A wondrous working—"the spirit's resort."
A dreamer and seer the brain of the hopeful,
And flowery the path that leads to the goal,
We wander through mazes of pleasure and riches;
A clear view, where beauty's the home of the soul.

Dream on, youthful strangers; may hope's choicest wishes
Point pleasures with splendor, tho' lowly your lot;
On the wings of your guardian, tho' unseen by others,
To dwell in a castle or beautiful cot
In the midst of your dreamland of music and flowers;
Your joyous young spirits will bound at the sight,
Now ardently work that these visions you cherish
May some day prove true to your fondest delight.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

I STOOD on the porch of the old haunted house,
Looking out on the shadowy night and the gloom,
And listening to noises from treble to bass,
For they seemed to proclaim to the listener a doom.
In the town of Ann Arbor, of Varsity fame,
Thirteen thirty-five South State, Michigan.
As it would not be right to mention a name,
Up rode to the sidewalk, on a black horse, a man.
Far forward he leaned o'er the saddle to peep,
Long he gazed at the old house, silent and grim.
The horse stood stock still, though the saddle did creak,
As the man in his eagerness studied his whim.
I scarcely did breathe wondering what it all meant,
While my stock of patience was nearly all spent.
Without any warning, I groaned loud and said,
In solemn tones, "Hamlet, I am thy father's ghost,
Doomed to walk the night"; my hand extended,
I strode from out the gloom, until my form
Like a specter walked forth to less dim shadows.
Soon he caught sight of the half-outlined spook;
Transfixed he was, but for one instant only,
Then with a bounding leap he took the road,
As one low astonished groan burst from his throat.
The fast clattering hoofs of that sturdy black
Told plainly the rider's pulse and heart beat fast;
As frantically he rode along the gloomy path,
Each rustling sound or glimmering rift of light
Or deepening gloom or hollow moaning sob
Made his excited brain to whirl and throb.
He felt the cold and clammy sweat upon his brow,
As with slackening pace he urged with spur and blow,
Nor scarcely saw or heeded what he passed,
Flew by, when suddenly his steed stood fast
Before his outer gate. Not he, he vaulted
Into the air and over the gate; assaulted



"Far up the Wisconsin."—Page 113.

The hall door of his house with maddened thumps,
Then white and wild into the house he bumps.
“A ghost!” he yelled; before his wife could answer make
He gasped then swooned, while his wife and children quake.
“Great God, what’s this has happened to your Sire.”
From head to foot his clothes were stained with mire.
The faithful nag without now neighing calls,
Through open door the sound it echoes through the halls.
They seemed at first all paralyzed with fear;
The wife, tho’ trembling, dashed away a tear,
And slams it shut with terror, the open door,
Then gazes on the moaning form upon the floor.
His eyes now open, and with effort tells,
With throbbing brain, as heart within him swells,
The story of his ghostly fright and ride:
“ ‘Hamlet, I am thy father’s ghost,’ it cried,
Then strode with groans from out its secret lair.
The sight it froze my blood, my bristled hair
Stood straight upon my head, my eyes bulged out.
I gathered all my strength and with a shout
I pulled the rein and dug the rowels deep,
Old Bob just flew and yet he seemed to creep,
For jeering imps with ‘catch ’em’ following ran,
O, how I got back here I neither know, nor can
I see why my old drunken father,
Who hanged himself, should think that I had done the murder,
But as sure as I am here upon this earth,
I will give that haunted house a wider berth.
You know I told you always when I pass alone
I heard strange noises, then a doleful groan.”
“Whoa, stop! Why, Ham, you’re drunk. The ghost, I say
Is your own self got drunk this very day.
Upon my soul, I cannot see, you hound,
When Bob he stopped, you vaulted gate to ground.
You look like you’d been in a railroad wreck.
You may thank your stars it hadn’t broke your neck,
Next time they’ll catch you. Bob will fail to run,
Your cake is dough as sure as you’re a gun.

Now hustle out and feed that poor old horse,
Then off to bed, you lazy, drunken cuss.
I can't see why Ham is always such a fool,
Never learns and wouldn't if he'd went to school.
I am rather pleased that he got such a fright,
It may do him good; foolish man, served him right."

Oft bursting merriment, ringing merrily,
Will bring discordant noises to a frightened soul,
Or lunar bow upon a fearsome cloud at night,
Its creamy circle spanning heaven's black arch,
As tho' the gods were painting destiny,
And musically the lightning plays to thunder's solemn march.
As a canopy is spread athwart the heavens
To shield in sacredness its purest gems,
While underneath a seething caldron heaves,
Should heart and brain of man be paralyzed!

MY FIRST DREAM IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE

A DREAD gaunt specter nightly haunts my dreams;
He steps so stealthily; his glaring eye seems
To burn into the marrow of my bones, the while
Cutting the tissue of my brain like a file.
Nightly this coming—sly apparition—
In the small hours, driving me to desperation.
Yet I dread to grapple with this ghostly walker.
His monotonous drawl as a talker
Jars and makes the flesh to quiver on the bones,
While beneath his tread the very earth it groans.
Embodiment of some spirit of the damned
Aping morbid gentility, crammed
With a saintly hypocritical look,
His half turned eyes in prayer, or reads from God's book,
With a hollow voice that keeps pace with his tread.
While a feeling of relief ever comes, when
His last mock sentence is ended with "Amen."
All this and more does he inflict on me.
Ah! what can such hellish strategy be!

Ever fascinating and polluting;
I try to speak but lose power of refuting
This weird Basilisk that holds me spellbound.
In my very marrow this X-ray is found.
Let not this wily fiend lay his clutches on you;
Repel him as I with virtue do,
Then no insidious snares can twine around your heart.
Let this goblin rove at midnight, act his part,
Then sneak back to his quarters, kith and kin,
They never know wherever he has been.
Now watch him glide into the shadow of his home
From clandestine visits of his midnight roam.

If sleep at all, when does he moments snatch?
Now stealthily at the door he lifts the latch
And slyly vanishes while yet 'tis night.
He dreads brave honor as he does the light.
Go, restless spirit, to a world infected,
Thy affinities howl among the worlds rejected.
Now kindly drop oblivion's mantle o'er his soul,
And into hell his every vestige roll.

WINTER IN THE HAUNTED HOUSE

FROM the window of my study,
In the gloom of early winter,
While the distant hills are fading
On the whitening landscape waste,
I listen to the hissing
Of the wind outside the casement,
As I gaze upon the scurrying
Of the snow-flakes in their haste.

My spirit's sad and sorrowing,
As I watch the fluffy billowing
In its hurly-burly tumbling
With my soul in that cold heap;

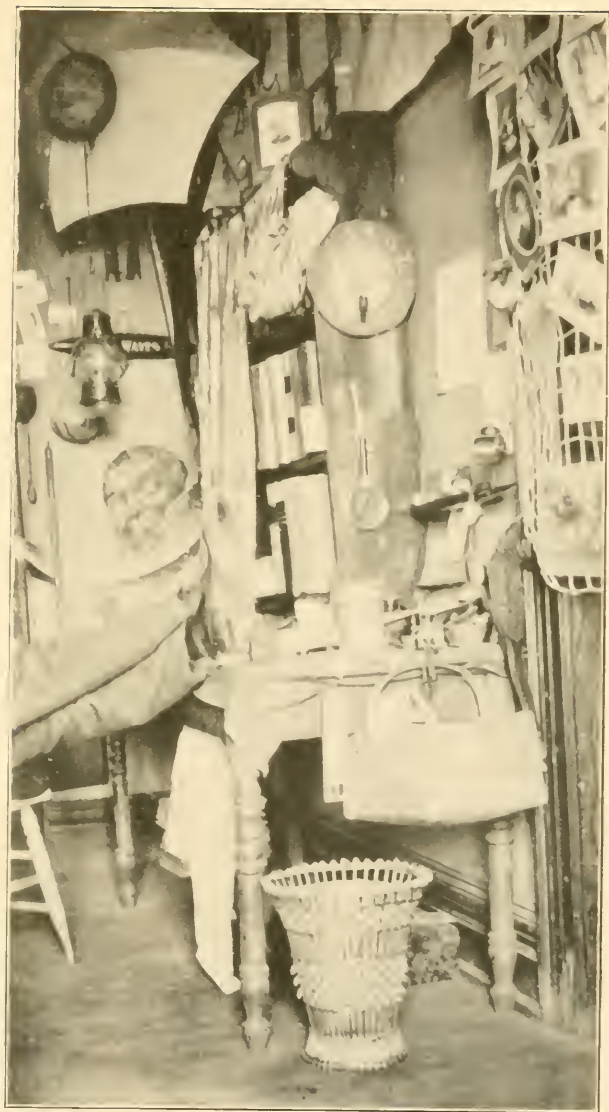
Though the fire within is spluttering,
I can scarcely keep from shuddering,
For that demon seems to call me,
With its angry hurrying sweep.

The trees now angrily rustle
In this stormy, surging bustle,
Shaking the feathery flyers
From their branches with a hurl;
And they look like frantic giants,
As they stand alone, defiant,
While the wind the snow is wafting,
With an icy, shrieking whirl.

With the night shades pressing near us,
And the gloaming gathering o'er us,
While the noise without is lulling
As it murmurs cold and low,
I wrap my cloak about me
For those icy sounds impress me.
Since the fire in grate's forgotten,
I must stir it to a glow.

The cold without's intenser,
While a crackling warmth dispenser
Keeps my blood and brain from freezing;
Now the fire is burning bright,
In my pondering, I grow weary
In this lonely castle dreary;
So I draw the blankets 'round me,
Tucked in bed this winter night.

Morning dawns, serene and glorious,
With effulgence bursting o'er us—
Every twig and branch is covered
With a virgin purity;
And it smiles with cold indulgence
On these classic sculptured wonders
Of this fairy artist's magic,
With a calm security.



A room in the Haunted House.—Page 118.

WISCONSIN RIVER

Fall of 1859

WITH visions of pleasure I built me a boat
Far up the Wisconsin, the river to float.
We put on a cabin with bunks good and tight;
Adrift on the water, my craft it was light;
A seat and two oars in the bow we did place;
A helm in the stern sheets, my back it did grace;
A stove and a table and larder I filled;
At aquatic tactics, myself I had drilled.
I looked 'round the town for a good friend or two;
I told them fine stories, I wanted a crew;
They listened delighted, then wanted to go;
And each, in his turn, was willing to row.
I should be captain, with Bernard the cook,
Squire Geer the first mate, but I kept the book;
Then I took my brother, a young boy and strong.

Our friends wished good luck to help us along;
Yes, plenty of girls, with kind words and good wishes,
Kept us busy exchanging their vows and their kisses;
The most of them laughed, while a few they did cry,
Yet smiling there glistened a tear in each eye;
God bless those dear girls, in that time long ago,
They waved us good bye, as we started to row.
Tho' cheering at starting, my heart it was sad;
Kate Dowling, I loved her. Did she love her lad?
Then I told Isabelle my ghost would return,
If drowned in the river, the truth she would learn.

When we stopped at the next town, little I thought
To meet Bell at Jonesdale, where we had brought
Our boat to a mooring, and made fast a line;
Our first meal to cook and get ready to dine.
I slipped out to see an old friend by the way,
Only a minute, had a short time to stay;
As I came 'round the corner near the porch post,
Bell Bernard saw me and thought it my ghost.

She screamed and turned white; I felt sorry, poor girl;
Her limbs all a-tremble, her head in a whirl;
I held her and told her it was me in the breath,
It looked to me there, it came near being her death.
They laughed at my story, when they heard what I said,
They knew I was living, though Bell thought me dead.
I bid them good bye, for I left them in haste,
And got back in time to be at our first feast.

When dinner was over, we let go our line;
Afloat in the river, the weather was fine;
We danced o'er the waters so rapid and clear;
Then sang an old favorite, our spirits to cheer;
The sunbeams were dancing the shadows among;
The clear leaping wavelets kept time to our song;
The echoes would answer from wood and from hill;
The valleys were smiling, and murmuring the rill,
As tinkling off tones on our heartstrings did beat,
While glad sparkling bubbles would burst at our feet;
The gloaming was coming, the sun going down;
The hill tops had put on their bright golden crown;
The full moon was up, and it mellowed the scene,
Now spread o'er the river a white silvery sheen;
The ducks on the surface would rise and would fly;
We startled the fishes; the night birds would cry;
With the dip of our oars, the diamonds would sparkle,
While a bright shining star like a crystal would flash;
We shipped in our blades, as we gazed on the sight;
The death of the twilight was birth of the night;
The day-god was gone, the night goddess was nigh
Afirting with shadows, the queen of the sky;
We sat and we watched the grandeur reveal;
Far off in the distance, a mellow bell's peal.

"By George," said the squire, "Wasn't that a grand meal,
Now let us tie up and get something to eat,"
We all hurried to jump at this commonplace roar;
We dipped in our blades and we pulled for the shore;
We built us a fire on the bank the first night;
When supper was cooked, we all ate in the light

Of the logs that burned brightly, sparks shooting high,
A brilliant flash darting far up in the sky;
The trees looked like sentinels, standing around
To guard and protect from enchantments profound;
We woke up the wood nymphs, and the words "Home, Sweet
Home,"

Did lingeringly echo,—why roam, oh, why roam?
The waters did gurgle, did sob and did splash;
The blaze of the fire did a ruddy glare dash
Far out, where the moonbeams did meet it, there melt
All over the glittering sheen like a belt,
When soft sparkling rubies and pearls interlace,
In mingling of colors, where fairies embrace.

Then out spoke the squire, "Let us all go to bed,"
And off for the boat, the boys, he then led;
The light dying down, o'er the bank he did lunge,
But little he thought in the river he'd plunge;
The first words he spoke was, "Girls, rum and tobacco,
Into the river the first pop!" and oh,
He coolly climbed out; this advice did he give,
"Be careful, go easy, on the river we live."
To say that we laughed would be drawing it mild,
We jumped and we yelled, yes, we nearly went wild;
We all loved the squire, an elderly man,
A typical gentleman, say what you can.

Of all the strange noises, the first night it seems
My loved ones and pleasure were mixed in my dreams;
I awoke, someone shouting, "The squire's in luck";
He had killed for our breakfast a partridge and duck.
If anything Bernard could do, it was cook,
A dark handsome fellow, a king in his book,
Quiet and cleanly, a musician with all,
He could lead in a concert, or play for a ball.

The breeze on the stream was steady and strong;
The splash of our oars like the stroke on a gong;
Resounding and bounding, all the world seems;
All the swaying foliage with bright color teems;

The wild plums were ripe in thicket and grove;
The buck strode the forest in majestic love;
The cry of the loon, as the wave it would dive;
We felt that all nature had more room to live.
Lone Rock we doubled, not a scrape with an oar;
We landed below and we all went ashore.
Of water the purest, the sweetest and clear,
A sparkling light beverage, brewed from nature's own tear.
We drank of the nectar, we smoked and we laughed,
Then we all went on board where we dined and we quaffed;
Our appetite splendid; our digestion light;
We were all in good humor; the day it was bright.
We had read of such journeyings, others had seen,
Now we knew for ourselves what to them it had been.
Our squire liked good things, yet, never would sponge,
So he rigged him a line to catch muskelunge,
A fisher and trapper and hunter was he,
No better companion in camp could there be;
We lived on the best we could catch or could buy.

Some people we'd banter, and others we'd guy;
We all went mad with an ecstatic glee;
Restraint to the wind, we were jolly and free.
They told us of brooks, along on our route,
That flowed clear and rapid where speckled trout
Sported in schools; and should we but try
We might catch all we needed, and have a good fry.
This living in splendor, this paradise home,
We felt that the wide world was our very own.

Wisconsin, in winter, is cold, but not drear,
Now autumn's gay colors in splendor appear;
Your river's a beauty, like stepping stones, rest
Your islands, secluding the game, when in quest;
Rich lands, with brave people, we bid you adieu;
On your soft yielding bosom, you've borne us so true.
Now into the Father of Waters we ply,
While to Prairie du Chien, we wave a goodbye.

Now we brought up the river onto a towhead,
"Saddle-bagged," was the next word the old squire said;



"My two grandsons,"—Page 118.

Sure enough, we had landed there and stuck tight,
"Let her alone, boys, we can stay here tonight,
Let us prospect around and see where we are,"
We had taken our mooring upon a sand bar;
It wasn't an island, where trees grew about,
But just an obstruction that lay in our route.
As we were provided with fuel and food,
We, all of us, felt in the very best mood,
Till the waves from a steamer set us afloat;
A pleasant adventure for us and our boat;
As we drifted along, in the foam of her wake,
While the rolling and tossing, our dishes would shake.

"Look out! There's a sawyer!" Some one did call,
As it rose in the river, then it would fall.
This snag, at the bottom, was stuck good and tight,
The other end loose, would rise in its might;
A dangerous customer, should we but roll
On the place where it rose, it would smash in a hole;
We thought of our bones that might bleach on the sand,
So we shifted our helm and made ready to land.
We ran up the mouth of a creek, in a bend,
Iowa greeting, we the welkin did rend.

Next morning, the sun had mounted above
The mist, o'er the water it scarce seemed to move;
When a light breeze broke through, away it did rise,
Melting to azure, as it mixed with the skies.
We slipped by the banks on our way down the brook,
Then on the swift current we had an outlook
At acres of lumber, all coupled in fleets,
Pulling for headway on these waterway streets.
The raftsmen lived in a small shanty town,
Where they cooked and they ate the whole way down;
All steamboats must whistle and give them the way,
With their monstrous fleet, as they float night and day.
These raftsmen would sing, as they heaved on the sweep,
So jolly and stalwart these men of the deep;
In pine woods, they worked all winter in snow,
And in summer, with lumber to market they go.

Now long wisps of light came drifting along,
When light opaque curtains o'er us would throng,
Till hid from ourselves in a dense misty wave,
Blind to all nature in a white foamy grave,
A fog bell was tolling far out o'er our bow;
We tried to get bearings, then started to row
Out there in the channel, no compass or chart,
We kept pulling around, till we nearly lost heart;
The first thing we knew something solid afloat
Was right up against us, an anchored steamboat;
We bumped and was gone, yet we never could tell
The place where we were, tho' it struck our death knell;
It seemed, in an instant, the fog did break,
As we drifted along in another boat's wake,
All noises seemed muffled, as drum's solemn beat,
When they bury the dead, after battle's defeat.

We had adventures, without lead line or log,
But our way now was clear, and pleasant to jog
Along on the highway that runs to the sea.
Oh, glorious visions, again we are free.

MY TWO GRANDSONS

OUR Buford has a visitor,
A little boy they say.
What a jolly pair they'll be,
When they can run and play.

"This little lad, so rosy fat,
Will make some fun and bother;
All that and more, he'll cry and grow
'Cause he's my little brother."

He looks upon this ten-pound mite
As something strange to see;
He doesn't know just what to think,
It looks that way to me.

- Yet you can never read a child,
Philosophers are they,
"I think he'll do, I think he won't,"
I seem to hear him say.
- "I'll let him have some of my things,
If he will only play;
And, if he'll run about with me,
I'll let him have his way.
- "'Cause he's littler than me,
And I am his big brother.
If he'll play fair, I'll be good.
I know that I had rather.
- "I think I'll like him when he's big,
If he doesn't act the dandy.
I'll let him have my hoe and rake,
If he'll divide his candy.
- "Oh, I don't care for that, you see
Grandpa will buy and share.
I'll give him all the biggest lumps,
I've fixed it now, so there.
- "My eyes are brown, just like my ma's;
Dark blue, our little lad's.
I wish that they would turn to gray,
The color of my dad's.
- "My name is Buford Thornton,
My brother's William Ed.
I think I like my name the best
But his might do instead.
- "One half is for his Uncle Will,
The Ed is for my dad.
I guess that he feels mighty big,
But I don't feel so bad."

THE YOUNG COWBOY

(Buford's first Christmas Poem by Grandpa).

I KNOW a little fellow,
A jolly kid he is,
He likes to go a riding,
A riding, with a whiz!
With saddle on his mustang
He mounts and calls his dog,
Off he speeds across the ranch
To bring cows on the jog.
His grandma keeps his ponies,
The ones he likes the best,
But, when he gets well mounted,
He seldom lets them rest.
He laughs and yells and spurs
His pony on the run,
The louder noise and racket,
The jollier is the fun.

YOU ARE THREE YEARS OLD TOMORROW

(To my Grandson, Buford).

I HEAR the merry laughter,
And the joyous ringing call,
And the rattle of the mallet
When it strikes the croquet ball.
Buford's not a silent laddie,
He's just bound to make a noise,
In these happy days of boyhood
To keep him silent spoils his joys.
This dark-eyed young Apollo
Is a democratic child.
He forms his own opinions,
Can be positive, yet mild,
He is very fond of freedom,



The Author and his two grandsons.—Page 119.

But, stay his imagined right,
He is up in arms instanter
With opposing will and might.
He's all right and just the stuff
That make our men of brains,
Guide true and train the intellect
Is the task that still remains.
He's three years old tomorrow;
Don't expect too much just now,
Mildly curb his wild ambitions
With a firm hand on his brow.
I love this darling, active boy.
Let the precious genial ray
Light up his young evolving mind,
It will help him win his way
To fame or fortune, honor bound,
When "thoughts are weapons stronger,"
"The child's the father of the man";
Now older, yet was younger.
You are three years old tomorrow,
While I'm past seventy-four;
Your walk in life has just begun,
But soon I'll close my door.

TO WILLIAM ED

ON the Seventeenth, where September fair
Came climbing up the golden stair,
I've not forgot a rosy tot,
Came breathing in the morning air.
A little boy chuck full of cry;
The blue of heaven in his eye;
He might be good, if you but would
Sing him a low, sweet lullaby.
Now one year old today, I'm told,
With flaxen hair blended with gold,
Reflected light so fair and bright,
With rounded limbs of classic mold.

Looks mother wise, with daddy's eyes,
This little lad is our last prize,
 When up and dressed, is at his best
Out on the floor among his toys.

He cannot talk, he cannot walk,
From table grabs a knife or fork,
 This little beat, he wants to eat,
And lustily puts in his work.

Sir William Ed is too well bred
To fuss about the food he's fed.
 Oft sits alone and bites a bone,
But never wants to go to bed.

Let sunshine sway a rhythmic lay,
For fragrance wafts the autumn day,
 Vibrating floats the Bob White's notes
Through golden maple leaves so gay.

The swallows skim, whip-poor-wills hymn,
The sun has dipped below the rim,
 The meteors blaze through moon-lit haze,
A fond good night, 'tis twilight dim.

W. W. WALKER

(Written by J. Ed. Thomas at the request of his father.)

HE quietly has passed. His years were full
Of work, a task the heart delighted in;
And, when his body failed himself, he took
To inward dwelling, looked well into his soul,
And studied at the questions of the day
And ever grew, though at the toppling point
Of life, where down the bare-faced cliff he saw
The restless sea just ready for its ebb.

He gave to life that it again be given;
Things were not small, nor were they made for man
Alone; each life is life, so touch it with
A care as you were handling master's work,
For such all is—the bird, the flower, and all
These creatures brothered here with man. He was
The friend, not of mankind alone, but of
All life; he saw the humblest in its home
As happy as the man. Oh, man! conceit
Doth work like wood-worm in the sill, and lets
The structure weaken at its base. Cast it out;
Purge thyself of this disease. Yea, some mix it
In the mortar of sanctuary and call
It sacred, then. Build, man,—build noble things,
And don't forget that nature, all, is building.

Why make example? Such a life is gold
To young ambition. Read beneath and see
That work is life, is happiness, is all
There is, when self can say, "It is well done."

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